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A SONG of a SINGLE NOTE

A Love Story

by

AMELIA E. BARR

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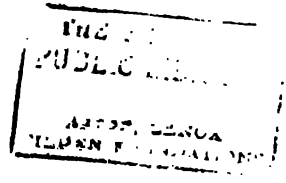


THE SONG OF A SINGLE NOTE.

A SONG OF A SINGLE NOTE

A LOVE STORY

By

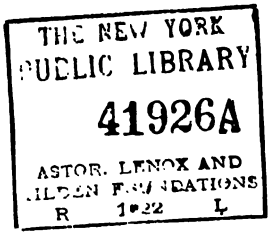
AMELIA E. BARR

Author of "The Bow of Orange Ribbon," "The Maid of Maiden Lane," etc.

New York

DODD, MEAD & COMPANY

1902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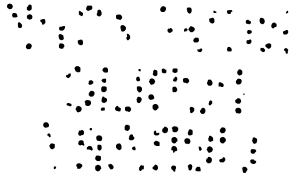

THE BURR PRINTING HOUSE,
NEW YORK.

TO

MY FRIEND,

DR. STEPHEN DECATUR HARRISON:

An American who loves his country "Right or Wrong."
And who always believes she is "Right,"

THIS NOVEL

IS WITH MUCH ESTEEM

DEDICATED.

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PROLOGUE.

"Love, its flutes will still be stringing,
Lovers still will sigh and kneel;
Freedom sets her trumpets ringing
To the clash of smiting steel."
So I weave of love and glory,
Homely toil, and martial show,
Fair romance from the grand story
Lived a century ago.

A Song of a Single Note

CHAPTER I.

RED OR BLUE RIBBONS.

It was the fourth year of the captivity of New York, and the beleaguered city, in spite of military pomp and display, could not hide the desolations incident to her warlike occupation. The beautiful trees and groves which once shaded her streets and adorned her suburbs had been cut down by the army sappers; her gardens and lawns upturned for entrenchments and indented by artillery wheels; and some of the best parts of the city blackened and mutilated by fire. Her churches had been turned into prisons and hospitals, and were centres of indescribable suffering and poisonous infection; while over the burnt district there had sprung up a town of tents inhabited by criminals and by miserable wretches whom starvation and despair had turned into highwaymen.

But these conditions were the work of man. Nature still lavished upon the captive city a glory of sunshine and blue skies; and winds, full of the freshness and sparkle of the great sea, blew through all her sickly streets. Wherever the gardens had not been destroyed, there was the scent of mays and

laburnums, and the indescribable beauty of apple blossoms on the first day of their birth.

In front of one of these fortunate enclosures, belonging to a little house on Queen Street, an old gentleman was standing, looking wistfully in at a trellis of small red roses. He turned away with a sigh as a man dressed like a sailor touched him on the arm, saying, as he did so:

"Well, then, Elder, a good afternoon to you? I am just from Boston, and I have brought you a letter from your son."

"You, De Vries! I didna look for you just yet."

"You know how it is. I am a man of experience, and I had a good voyage both ways."

"And Robertson and Elliot and Ludlow will have a good percentage on your cargoes?"

"That is the way of business. It is as it ought to be. I do not defraud or condemn the Government. It is the young—who have no knowledge or experience—who do such things."

"What do you bring in, Captain?"

"Some provisions of all kinds; and I shall take back some merchandise of all kinds—for them who can not get it in any other way."

"To Boston again?"

"This time only to the Connecticut coast. The goods will easily go further. The trade is great. What then? I must waste no time; I have to live by my business."

"And I have nae doubt you think the 'business' on the King's service."

"Every respectable man is of that way of thinking. We carry no military stores. I am very precise

about that. It is one of my principles. And what, then, would the merchants of New York do without this opening for trade? They would be ruined; and there would also be starvation. They who say different are fools; we give help and comfort to the royalists, and we distress the rebels, for we take from them all their ready money. If the trade was not 'on the King's service,' the Governor would not be in it."

"Even so! That circumstance shows it is not far out o' the way."

"'Out of the way!' What the deuce, Elder! I am a deacon in the Middle Kirk. My respectability and honesty cannot be concealed: any one can see them. Batavius de Vries would not steal a groschen; no, nor half of one!"

"Easy, easy, Captain! Why should you steal? It is far mair lucrative to cheat than to steal; and the first is in the way o' business—as you were remarking. But this or that, my good thanks for the letter you have brought me; and is there anything I can do in return for your civility?"

"If you will kindly call at my dwelling and tell Madame I am arrived here safe and sound; that would be a great satisfaction for us both."

"I pass your door, Captain, and I will tell Madame the good news. Nae doubt she will gie me a smile for it."

Then De Vries turned away with some remark about business, and Elder Semple stood still a moment, fingering the bulky letter which had been given him; and, as he did so, wondering what he should do, for "ill news comes natural these days," he

thought, "and maybe I had better read it through, before I speak a word to Janet anent it. I'll step into the King's Arms and see what Alexander has to say."

When he entered the coffee-room he saw his son, Mr. Neil Semple, and Governor Robertson sitting at a table with some papers between them. Neil smiled gravely, and moved a chair into place for his father, and the Governor said pleasantly:

"How are you, Elder? It is a long time since I saw you."

"I am as well as can be expected, considering a' things, Governor; but what for will I be 'Elder,' when I have nae kirk to serve?"

"Is that my fault, Elder?"

"You might have spoke a word for the reopening of the kirk, and the return o' Dr. Rogers. Your affirmative would have gone a long way toward it. And the loyal Calvinists o' New York hae been too long kirkless. What for didn't you speak the word, Governor? What for?"

"Indeed, Elder, you know yourself that Dr. Rogers is a proved traitor. As a fundamental rule, a Calvinist is a democrat—exceptions, of course—like yourself and your worthy sons, but as a fundamental, natural democrats. There is the Church of England open for all services."

"Aye; and there is the Kirk o' Scotland closed for all services. What has the Kirk done against King George?"

"Must I remind you, Elder, that her ministers, almost without exception, are against the King? Did not this very Dr. Rogers pray in the pulpit for

the success of the rebels? As for the Church of Scotland, she has been troubling kings, and encouraging rebellion ever since there was a Church of Scotland. What for? No reason at all, that I can see."

"Yes, she had reason enough. Scotsmen read their Bibles, and they thought it worth while to fight for the right to do so. There's your colleague, Judge Ludlow; his great-grandfather fought with Oliver Cromwell in England in a quarrel of the same kind. He should have said a word for us."

"Elder, it is undeniable that Dissent and Calvinism are opposed to royalty."

"The Kirk is not subject to Cæsar; she is a law unto hersel'; and the Methodists are dissenters, yet their chapel is open."

"The loyalty of John Wesley is beyond impeachment. He is a friend of the King."

"Yet his brother Charles was imprisoned for praying for the Pretender; and nae doubt at all, he himsel' would gladly have followed Prince Charlie."

"As the Semples and Gordons *did do*."

"To their everlasting glory and honor! God bless them!"

"Will your Excellency please to sign these papers?" interrupted Neil; and his calm ignoring of the brewing quarrel put a stop to it. The papers were signed, and the Governor rising, said, as he offered his hand to the Elder:

"Our sufferings and deprivations are unavoidable, sir. Is there any use in quarreling with the wheel that splashes us?"

"There is nane; yet, if men have grievances——"

"Grievances! That is a word that always pleases, and always cheats. There are no grievances between you and me, I hope."

"None to breed ill-will. Human nature is fallible, but as a rule, Tory doesna eat Tory."

"And as for the Whigs, Elder, you know the old fable of the wolf and the lamb. Judging from that past event, Tory and Whig may soon make an eternal peace."

He went out well pleased at the implication, and Neil, after a few moments' silence, said, "I am going to register these documents, sir, or I would walk home with you."

"Much obligated to you, Neil, but I can tak' very good care o' mysel'. And I have a letter from your brother Alexander. I must see what news he sends, before I tell your mother."

He was opening his letter as he spoke, carefully cutting round the large red seal, which bore the arms of the Semples, and which, therefore, he would have thought it a kind of sacrilege to mutilate. A cup of coffee had been brought to him, and he took one drink of it, and then no more; for everything was quickly forgotten or ignored in the intelligence he was receiving. That it was unexpected and astonishing was evident from his air of perplexity and from the emotion which quite unconsciously found relief in his constant ejaculation, *"Most extraordinary! Most extraordinary!"*

Finally, he folded up the epistle, threw a shilling on the table for his entertainment, and with more speed than was usual, took the road to the west of Broadway. He had been remarkable in days past

for his erect carriage, but he walked now with his head bent and his eyes fixed on the ground. There was so much that he did not want to see, though he was naturally the most curious and observant of mortals. Fifteen minutes' walk brought him to the river side, and anon to a large house separated from his own by a meadow. There were horses tied to the fence and horses tethered in the garden; and in a summer-house under a huge linden tree, a party of soldiers drinking and playing dominoes. The front door was partly open, and a piece of faded red ribbon was nailed on its lintel. Semple knocked loudly with his walking-stick, and immediately a stout, rosy woman came toward him, wiping her hands on a clean towel as she did so.

"Well, then, Elder!" she cried, "you are a good sight! What is the matter, that you never come once to see us, this long time?"

"I come now to bring you good news Joanna—Madame, I should say."

"No, no! I make not so much ceremony. When you say 'Joanna' I think of the good days, before everybody was unfriends with each other."

"Well, then, Joanna, your husband is back again; as he says, safe and sound; and I promised him to let you know as I passed."

"But come in once, Elder—come in!"

"Some day—some day soon. I am in haste at this time—and you have much company, I see." He spoke with evident disapproval, and Joanna was at once on the defensive.

"I know not how to alter that. A good wife must do some little thing these hard times; for what is to

come after them, who knows—and there are many boys and girls—but I am not discontented; I like to look at the bright side, and that is right, is it not?"

Semple had already turned away, and he only struck his cane on the flagged walk in answer. For while Joanna was speaking he had casually noticed the fluttering red ribbon above her head; and it had brought from the past a memory, unbidden and unexpected, which filled his eyes with the thin, cold tears of age, and made his heart tremble with a fear he would not allow himself to entertain.

He was so troubled that he had to consciously gather his forces together before he entered his own dwelling. It, at least, kept visible state and order; the garden, perhaps, showed less variety and wealth of flowers; but the quiet dignity of its handsomely furnished rooms was intact. In their usual parlor, which was at the back of the house, he found his wife. "You are late to-day, Alexander," she said pleasantly; "I was just waiting till I heard your footstep. Now I can make the tea."

"I'll be glad o' a cup, Janet. I'm fairly tired, my dearie."

"What kept you so far ahint your ordinar time? I thought it long waiting for you."

"Twa or three things kept me, that I am not accountable for. I was on the way hame, when Batavius De Vries spoke to me."

"He's back again, is he? Few words would do between you and him."

"He brought me a letter from our lad in Boston; and I thought I would go into the King's Arms and read it."

"You might have come hame."

"I might; but I thought if there was any bad news folded in the paper, I would just leave it outside our hame."

"There is naething wrang, then?"

"It is an astonishment—the lad has sold all he had and gone to Scotland. When he can find a small estate that suits him, he thinks o' buying it, and becoming 'Semple o' that Ilk.' Alexander aye had a hankering after land."

"He has the siller, I suppose; there is no land given awa in Scotland."

"Alexander wasn't born yesterday. He has been sending siller to England ever since the first whisper o' these troubles. Ten years ago, he told me the Stamp Act riots spelt Revolution and maybe Independence; and that in such case the best we could hope for would be a dozen or mair states, each with its ain rights and privileges and government; and a constant war between them. He is a far-seeing lad, is Alexander."

"I think little o' his far sight. There are others who see further and clearer: petty states and constant war! Na, na! *It's not so written.*"

"Perhaps he is right, Janet."

"Perhaps is a wide word, Alexander. Perhaps he is wrang. Has he sailed yet? And pray, what is to become of the little Maria?"

"He sailed a week since—and Maria is coming to us."

"Coming to us! And what will we do wi' the lassie?"

"We'll just hae to love and comfort her. In a

way she has neither father nor mother—the one being in the grave and the other beyond seas. She may be a pleasure to our auld age; when she was here last she was a bonnie, lovesome little creature."

"That is mair than eight years ago, and she was eight years old then; she'll be sixteen and a half, or, perhaps, nearer seventeen now—you ken weel what to expect from lassies o' that indiscreet age; or, if you don't, you ought to."

"I know she is our ain grandbairn and that we be to give her love and all that love calls for. She was the very image o' yoursel' Janet, and her father was much set up o'er the extraordinar likeness."

"I thought she favored you, Alexander."

"A little—a little, perhaps—but not enough to spoil her. If she has kept the Gordon beauty, she will be a' the mair welcome to me. I have aye had a strong prejudice in its favor;" and he leaned forward and took Madame's small brown hand, and then there was a look and a smile between the old lovers that made all words impotent and unnecessary.

Such pauses are embarrassing; the lealest hearts must come back quickly to ordinary life, and as the Elder passed his cup for more tea, Madame asked: "What way is the lassie coming? By land or water?"

"She is coming by land, with John Bradley and his daughter."

"How's that?"

"Madame Charlton's school had to be closed, and Agnes Bradley was one of the scholars. Her father has gone to Boston to bring her hame, and Maria

being her friend and schoolmate, Bradley promised Alexander to see her safe in our home and care. Doubtless, he is well able to keep his word. If the Governor and the Commander-in-Chief can do ought to mak' travel safe, John Bradley will hae their assistance; but I'm vexed to be put under an obligation to him. I would rather have sent Neil, or even gane mysel'."

"What ails you at John Bradley? He wears the red ribbon on his breast, and it blaws o'er his shop door, and he is thick as thack with a' the dignities—civil and military."

"I don't like him, and I don't like his daughter being friends with my granddaughter."

"He serves our turn now, and once is nae custom."

"Let alone the fact that girls' friendships are naething but fine words and sugar candy. I shall put a stop to this one at the very outset."

"You'll do what, gudeman?"

"Put my commands on Maria. I shall tell her that beyond yea and nay, and a fine day, or the like o' that, she is to have no intercourse wi' John Bradley's daughter."

"You'll have revolution inside the house, as weel as outside. Let the girls alane. Some young men will come between them and do your business for you. You have managed your lads pretty well—wi' my help—but two schoolgirls in love wi' one anither! they will be aboon your thumb—ane o' them may keep you busy."

"I shall lay my commands on Maria."

"And if Maria tak's after the Gordons, she'll be

far mair ready to give commands than to tak' them. Let be till she gets here. When did she leave Boston?"

"Mair than a week ago, but Sunday intromits, and Bradley, being what they call a local preacher would hae to exploit his new sermon and hold a class meeting or a love feast; forbye, he wouldna neglect ony bit o' business that came his way on the road. I shouldn't wonder if they were at Stamford last Sunday, and if so, they would be maist likely at East Chester to-night. They might be here to-morrow. I'll ask Neil to ride as far as the Halfway House; he will either find, or hear tell o' them there."

"What for should Neil tak' that trouble? You ken, as weel as I do, that if Bradley promised Maria's father to deliver her into your hand, at your ain house, he would do no other way. Say you were from hame, he would just keep the lassie till he could keep his promise. He is a very Pharisee anent such sma' matters. If you have finished your tea, gudeman, I will get the dishes put by."

They both rose at these words, Madame pulled a bell rope made of a band of embroidery, and a girl brought her a basin of hot water and two clean towels. Semple lit his long, clay pipe and went into the garden to see how the early peas were coming on, and to meditate on the events the day had brought to him. Madame also had her meditations, as she carefully washed the beautiful Derby china, and the two or three Apostle teaspoons, and put them away in the glass cupboard that was raised in one corner of the room. Her thoughts were complex,

woven of love and hope and fear and regret. The advent of her granddaughter was not an unmixed delight; she was past sixty, not in perfect health, and she feared the care and guiding of a girl of scarce seventeen years old.

"Just the maist unreasonable time of any woman's life," she sighed. "At that age, they are sure they know a' things, and can judge a' things; and to doubt it is rank tyranny, and they are in a blaze at a word, for they have every feeling at fever heat. A body might as well try to reason wi' a baby or a bull, for they'll either cry or rage, till you give in to them. However, Maria has a deal o' Gordon in her, and they are sensible bodies—in the main. I'll even do as the auld song advises:

"Bide me yet, and bide me yet,
For I know not what will betide me yet."

When the room was in order, she threw a shawl round her and went to her husband. "I hae come to bring you inside, Elder," she said, "the night air is chilly and damp yet, and you arena growing younger."

"I walked down as far as the river bank, Janet," he answered, "and I see the boat is rocking at her pier. Neil should look after her."

"Neil is looking after another kind of a boat at present. I hope he will have as much sense as the rats, and leave a sinking ship in good time to save himsel'."

"Janet, you should be feared to say such like words! They are fairly wicked—and they gie me a sair heart."

"Oh, forgive me, Alexander! My thoughts will fly to my lips. I forget! I forget! I hae a sair heart, too"—and they went silently into the house with this shadow between them until Janet said:

"Let me help you off wi' your coat, dearie. Your soft, warm wrap is here waiting for you," and against her gentle words and touch he had no armor. His offense melted away, he let her help him to remove his heavy satin-lined coat, with its long stiffened skirts, and fold round his spare form the damasse wrap with its warm lining of flannel. Then, with a sigh of relief he sat down, loosened his neckband, handed Madame his laces, and called for a fresh pipe."

In the meantime Madame hung the coat carefully over a chair, and in flecking off a little dust from its richly trimmed lapel, she tossed aside with an unconscious contempt, the bit of scarlet ribbon at the buttonhole. "You are requiring a new ribbon, Alexander," she said. "If you must wear your colors on your auld breast, I would, at least, hae them fresh."

He either ignored, or did not choose to notice the spirit of her words; he took them at their face value, and answered: "You are right, Janet. I'll buy a half yard in the morning. I tell you, that one bit o' rusty, draggled red ribbon gave me a heart-ache this afternoon."

Madame did not make the expected inquiry, and after a glance into her face he continued: "It was at the Van Heemskirk's house. I was talking to Joanna, and I saw it o'er the door, and remembered the night my friend Joris nailed up the blue ribbon

which Batavius has taken down. I could see him standing there, with his large face smiling and shining, and his great arms reaching upward, and I could hear the stroke o' the hammer that seemed to keep time to his words: '*Alexander myn jougen!*' he said, 'for Freedom the color is always blue. Over my house door let it blow; yes, then, over my grave also, if God's will it be.' And I answered him, 'you are a fool, Joris, and you know not what you are saying or doing, and God help you when you do come to your senses.' Then he turned round with the hammer in his hand and looked at me—I shall never forget that look—and said 'a little piece of blue ribbon, Alexander, but for a man's life and liberty it stands, for dead already is that man who is not free.' Then he took me into the garden, and as we walked he could talk of naething else, 'men do not need in their coffins to lie stark,' he said, 'they may without that, be dead; walking about this city are many dead men.' "

"Joris Van Heemskirk is a good man. Wherever he is, I ken well, he is God's man," said Janet, "doing his duty simply and cheerfully."

"As he sees duty, Janet; I am sure o' that. And as he talked he kept touching the ribbon in his waistcoat, as if it was a sacred thing, and when I said something o' the kind, he answered me out o' the Holy Book, and bid me notice God himself had chosen blue and told Israel to wear it on the fringes o' their garments as a reminder o' their deliverance by Him. Then I couldna help speaking o' the Scotch Covenanters wearing the blue ribbon, and he followed wi' the Dutch Protestors, and I was able

to cap the noble army wi' the English Puritans fighting under Cromwell for civil and religious liberty."

"And gudeman!" cried Janet, all in a tremble of enthusiasm, "General Washington is at this very time wearing a broad blue ribbon across his breast;" and there was such a light in her eyes, and such pride in her voice, the Elder could not say the words that were on his tongue; he magnanimously passed by her remark and returned to his friend, Joris Van Heemskirk. "Blue or red," he continued, "we had a wonderfu' hour, and when we came to part that night we had no need to take each other's hands; we had been walking hand-in-hand together like twa laddies, and we did not know it."

"You'll have many a happy day with your friend yet, gudeman; Joris Van Heemskirk will come hame again."

"He will hae a sair heart when he sees his hame, specially his garden."

"He will hae something in his heart to salve all losses and all wrongs; but I wonder Joanna doesna take better care o' her father's place."

"She canna work miracles. I thought when I got her there as tenant o' the King, she would keep a' things as they were left; but Batavius has six or eight soldiers boarding there—low fellows, non-commissioned officers and the like o' them—and the beautiful house is naething but barricks in their sight; and as for the garden, what do they care for boxwood and roses? They dinna see a thing beyond their victuals, and liquor, and the cards and dominoes in their hands. Joanna has mair than she can manage."

"Didn't Batavius sell his house on the East river?"

"Of course he did—to the Government—made a good thing of it; then he got into his father-in-law's house as a tenant of the Government. I don't think he ever intends to move out of it. When the war is over he will buy it for a trifle, as confiscated property."

"He'll do naething o' the kind! He'll never, never, never buy it. You may tak' my solemn word for that, Alexander Semple."

"How do you ken so much, Janet?"

"The things we ken best, are the things we were never told. I will not die till I have seen Joris Van Heemskirk smoking his pipe with you on his ain hearth, and in his ain summer-house. He can paint some new mottoes o'er it then."

She was on the verge of crying, but she spoke with an irresistible faith, and in spite of his stubborn loyalty to King George, Semple could not put away the conviction that his wife's words were true. They had all the force of an intuition. He felt that the conversation could not be continued with Joris Van Heemskirk as its subject, and he said, "I wonder what is keeping Neil? He told me he would be hame early to-night."

"Then you saw him to-day?"

"He was in the King's Arms, when I went there to read my letter—he and Governor Robertson—and I had a few words wi' the Governor anent Dr. Rogers and the reopening of our kirk."

"You did well and right to speak them. It is a sin and a shame in a Christian country to be kept out o' Sabbath ordinances."

"He told me we had the Church o' England to go to."

"Aye; and we hae the King o' England to serve."

"Here comes Neil, and I am glad o' it. Somehow, he makes things mair bearable."

The young man entered with a grave cheerfulness; he bowed to his father, kissed his mother, and then drew a chair to the cold hearth. In a few minutes he rang the bell, and when it was answered, bid the negro bring hot coals and kindle the fire.

"Neil, my dear lad," said the Elder, "are you remembering that wood is nearly ungetable—ten pounds or mair a cord? I hae but little left. I'm feared it won't see the war out."

"If wood is getable at any price, I am not willing to see mother and you shivering. Burn your wood as you need it, and trust for the future."

"I hae told your father the same thing often, Neil; careful, of course, we must be, but sparing is not caring. There was once a wife who always took what she wanted, and she always had enough." The fire blazed merrily, and Neil smiled, and the Elder stretched out his thin legs to the heat, and the whole feeling of the room was changed. Then Madame said:

"Neil, your brother Alexander has gane to Scotland."

"I expected him to take that step."

"And he is sending little Maria to us, until he gets a home for her."

"I should not think she will be much in the way, mother. She is only a child."

"She is nearly seventeen years old. She won't be

much in my way; it is you that will hae to take her out—to military balls and the like."

"Nonsense! I can't have a child trailing after me in such places."

"Vera likely you will trail after her. You will be better doing that than after some o' the ladies o' Clinton's court."

"I can tell you, Neil," said Neil's father, "that it is a vera pleasant sensation, to hae a bonnie lassie on your arm wha is, in a manner, your ain. I ken naething in the world that gives a man such a superior feeling."

Neil looked at the speaker with a curious admiration. He could not help envying the old man who had yet an enthusiasm about lovely women.

"I fancy, sir," he answered, "that the women of your youth were a superior creation to those of the present day. I cannot imagine myself with any woman whose society would give me that sensation."

"Women are always the same, Neil—yesterday, to-day, and forever. What they are now, they were in Abraham's time, and they will be when time shall be nae langer. Is not that so, mother?"

"Maybe; but you'll tak' notice, they hae suited a' kinds o' men, in a' countries and in a' ages. I dare say our little Maria will hae her lovers as well as the lave o' them, and her uncle Neil will be to keep an eye on them. But I'm weary and sleepy, and if you men are going to talk the fire out I'll awa' to my room and my bed."

"I have something to say to father," answered Neil, "about the Government, and so——"

"Oh, the Government!" cried Madame, as she stood with her lighted candle in her hand at the open door; "dinna call it a government, Neil; call it a blunderment, or a plunderment, if you like, but the other name is out o' all befitting."

"Mother, wait a moment," said Neil. "You were saying that Maria would want to be taken to dances; I got an invitation to-day. What do you say to this for an introduction?" As he spoke he took out of his pocket a gilt-edged note tied with transverse bands of gold braid and narrow red ribbon. Madame watched him impatiently as he carefully and deliberately untied the bows, and his air of reverential regard put her in a little temper.

"Cut the strings and be done wi' it, Neil," she said crossly. "There is nae invite in the world worth such a to-do as you are making. And dinna forget, my lad, that you once nearly threw your life awa' for a bit o' orange ribbon! Maybe the red is just as dangerous."

Then Neil took the red ribbon between his finger and thumb, and dropping it into the fire looked at his mother with the denial in his face. "It is from Mrs. Percival," he said; and she nodded her understanding, but could not help giving him a last word ere she closed the door:

"If you hae a fancy for ribbons, Neil, tak' my advice, and get a blue one; a' the good men in the country are wearing blue."

CHAPTER II.

THE FAIR AND THE BRAVE.

At breakfast next morning the conversation turned naturally upon the arrival of Maria Semple. The Elder showed far the most enthusiasm concerning it. He wondered, and calculated, and supposed, till he felt he had become tiresome and exhausted sympathy, and then he subsided into that painful attitude of disappointment and resignation, which is, alas, too often the experience of the aged? His companions were not in sympathy with him. Madame was telling herself she must not expect too much. Once she had set her heart upon a beautiful girl who was to become Neil's wife, and her love had been torn up by the roots: "maist women carry a cup of sorrow for some one to drink," she thought, "and I'm feared for them." As for Neil, he felt sure the girl was going to be a tie and a bore, and he considered his brother exceedingly selfish in throwing the care of his daughter upon his aged parents.

It was not a pleasant meal, but in good hearts depression and doubt find no abiding place. When Neil had gone to his affairs, the Elder looked at his wife, and she gave him his pipe with a smile, and talked to him about Maria as she put away her china. And she had hardly turned the key of the glass

closet, when the knocker of the front door fell twice —two strokes, clear, separate, distinct. The Elder rose quickly and with much excitement. "That is Bradley's knock," he said; "I never heard it before, but it is just the way he would call any one."

He was going out of the room as he spoke, and Madame joined him. When they entered the hall the front door was open, and a short, stout man was standing on the threshold, holding a young girl by the hand. He delivered her to the Elder very much as he would have delivered a valuable package intrusted to his care, and then, as they stood a few moments in conversation, Maria darted forward, and with a little cry of joy nestled her head on her grandmother's breast. The confiding love of the action was irresistible. "You darling!" whispered the old lady with a kiss; "let me look at you!" And she put her at arm's length, and gazed at the pretty, dark face with its fine color, and fine eyes, charmingly set off by the scarlet hood of her traveling cloak.

"What do you think o' your granddaughter, Elder?" she asked, when he joined them, and her voice was trembling with love and pride.

"I think she is yoursel' o'er again; the vera same bonnie Janet Gordon I woo'd and loved in Strathallen nearly fifty years syne. Come and gie me twenty kisses, bairnie. You are a vera cordial o' gladness to our hearts."

Madame had swithered in her own mind before the arrival of Maria about the room she was to occupy—the little one in the wing, furnished in rush and checked blue and white linen; or the fine guest room over the best parlor. A few moments with her

grandchild had decided her. "She shall hae the best we have," she concluded. "What for would I gie it to my cousin Gordon's wife, and lock my ain flesh and blood out o' it?" So she took Maria to her best guest chamber, and when the girl stood in the center of it and looked round with an exclamation of delight, she was well rewarded.

"This is the finest room I ever saw," said Maria. "I love splendid rooms, and mahogany makes any place handsome. And the looking glasses! O grandmother, I can see myself from top to toe!" and she flung aside her cloak, and surveyed her little figure in its brown camblet dress and long white stomacher, with great satisfaction.

"And where are your clothes, Maria?" asked Madame.

"I brought a small trunk with me, and Mr. Bradley will send it here this morning; the rest of my trunks were sent with Captain De Vries. I dare say they will be here soon."

"They are here already, De Vries arrived yesterday; but the rest o' your trunks, how many more have you, lassie?"

"Three large, and one little one. Father told me I was to get everything I wanted, and I wanted so many things. I got them all, grandmother—beautiful dresses, and mantillas, and pelerines; and dozens of pretty underwear. I have had four women sewing for me ever since last Christmas."

"But the expense o' it, Maria!"

"Mrs. Charlton said I had simply received the proper outfit for a young lady entering society."

"But whatever did your father say?"

"He whistled very softly. There are many ways of whistling, grandmother, and my father's whistle was his form of saying he was astonished."

"I hae no doubt he was astonished."

"I had to have summer and winter dresses, and ball dresses, and home dresses, and street dresses; and all the little things which Mrs. Charlton says are the great things. Father is very generous to me, and he has ordered Lambert and Co. to send me thirty pounds every month. He told me that food and wood and every necessity of life was very dear in New York, and that if I was a good girl I would do my full share in bearing the burden of life."

This was her pretty way of making it understood that she was to pay liberally for her board, and then, with a kiss, she added, "let us go downstairs. I want to see all the house, grandmother. It is like home, and I have had so little home. All my life nearly has been spent at school. Now I am come home."

They went down hand in hand, and found the Elder walking about in an excited manner. "I think I shall bide awa' from business to-day," he said; "I dinna feel like it. It isna every day a man gets a granddaughter."

"*Tuts!* Nonsense, Alexander! Go your ways to the store, then you can talk to your acquaintance o' your good fortune. Maria and I will hae boxes to unpack, and clothes to put away; and you might as weel call at De Vries, and tell him to get Miss Semple's trunks here without sauntering about them. Batavius is a slow creature. And Neil must hae the

news also, so just be going as quick as you can, Alexander."

He was disappointed; he had hoped that Maria would beg him to stay at home, but he put on his long coat with affected cheerfulness, and with many little delays finally took the road. Then the two women went through the house together, and by that time Bradley had sent the small trunk, and they unpacked it, and talked about the goods, and about a variety of subjects that sprang naturally from the occupation.

All at once Madame remembered to ask Maria where she had spent the previous night, and the girl answered, "I slept at the Bradley's. It was quite twilight when we reached their house, and Mr. Bradley said this road was beset by thieves and bad people after dark, and he also thought you retired early and would not care to be disturbed."

"Vera considerate o' Mr. Bradley, I am sure; perhaps mair so than necessary. Maria, my dear, I hope you are not very friendly wi' his daughter."

"Not friendly with Agnes Bradley! Why, grandmother, I could not be happy without her! She has been my good angel for three years. When she came to Mrs. Charlton's I had no friends, for I had such a bad temper the girls called me 'Spitfire' and 'Vixen' and such names, and I was proud of it. Agnes has made me gentle and wishful to do right. Agnes is as nearly an angel as a woman can be."

"Fair nonsense, Maria! And I never was fond o' angelic women, they dinna belong to this world; and your grandfather dislikes John Bradley, he will

not allow any friendship between you and Agnes Bradley. That is sure and certain."

"What has Mr. Bradley done wrong to grandfather?"

"Naething; naething at all! He just does not like him."

"I shall have to explain things to grandfather. He ought not to take dislikes to people without reason."

"There's no one can explain things to your grandfather that he does not want to understand. I know naething o' John Bradley, except that he is a Methodist, and that kind o' people are held in scorn."

"I think we can use up all our scorn on the Whigs, grandmother, and let the Methodists alone. Mr. Bradley is a Tory, and trusted and employed by the Government, and I am sure he preached a beautiful sermon last Sunday at Stamford."

"Your grandfather said he would preach at Stamford."

"He preached on the green outside the town. There were hundreds to listen to him. Agnes led the singing."

"Maria Semple! You don't mean to tell me you were at a field preaching!"

"It was a good preaching and——"

"The man is a saddle-maker! I hae seen him working, day in and day out, in his leather apron."

"St. Paul was a tent-maker; he made a boast of it, and as he was a sensible man, I have no doubt he wore an apron. He would not want to spoil his toga."

"Hush! Hush! You must not speak o' Saint Paul in that tempered and common way. The Apostles belong to the Kirk. Your father was brought up a good Presbyterian."

"Dear grandmother, I am the strictest kind of Presbyterian. I really went to hear Agnes. If you had seen her standing by her father's side on that green hill and heard her sing:

> "Israel, what hast thou to dread?
> Safe from all impending harms,
> Round thee, and beneath thee, spread,
> Are the everlasting arms."

you would have caught up the song as hundreds did do, till it spread to the horizon, and rose to the sky, and was singing and praying both. People were crying with joy, and they did not know it."

"I would call her a dangerous kind o' girl. Has she any brothers or sisters?"

"Her brother went to an English school at the beginning of the war. He was to finish his education at Oxford. Annie Gardiner—one of the schoolgirls—told me so. He was her sweetheart. She has no sisters."

"Sweetheart?"

"Just boy and girl sweethearting. Agnes seldom spoke of him; sometimes she got letters from him."

"Has Agnes a sweetheart?"

"There was a young gentleman dressed like a sailor that called on her now and then. We thought he might be an American privateer."

"Then Agnes Bradley is for the Americans! Well, a good girl, like her, would be sure to take the

right side. Nae doubt the hymn she sung referred to the American army."

"I am sure people thought so; indeed, I fear Agnes is a little bit of a rebel, but she has to keep her thoughts and feelings to herself."

"Plenty o' folks hae to do the same; thought may be free here, but speech is bond slave to His Majesty George o' Hanover, or England, or Brunswick, or what you like."

"Or America!"

"Nae, nae! You may make that last statement wi' great reservation, Maria. But we must make no statements that will vex your grandfather, for he is an auld man, and set in his ways, and he does not believe in being contradicted."

And at this moment they heard the Elder's voice and step. He came in so happily, and with such transparent excuses for his return home, that the women could not resist his humor. They pretended to be delighted; they said, "how nice it was that he had happened to arrive just as dinner was ready to serve;" they even helped him to reasons that made his return opportune and fortunate. And Batavius arriving with the trunks immediately after the meal, Madame made unblushing statements about her dislike of the man, and her satisfaction in the Elder being at hand to prevent overcharges, and see to the boxes being properly taken upstairs.

Then Maria begged him to remain and look at her pretty things, and that was exactly what he wished to do; and so, what with exhibiting them, and trying some of them on, and sorting, and putting them into drawers and wardrobes, the after-

noon slipped quickly away. The Elder had his pipe brought upstairs, and he sat down and smoked it on the fine sofa Mrs. Gordon had covered with her own needlework when she occupied the room; and no one checked him or made discouraging demurs. He had his full share of the happy hours; and he told himself so as the ladies were dressing; and he sat waiting for Neil, alone with his pleasant thoughts and anticipations.

"Auld age has its compensations," he reflected. "They wouldna hae let Neil sit and smoke amid their fallals; and it was the bonniest sight to watch them, to listen to their *Ohs!* and *Ahs!* and their selfish bits o' prattle, anent having what no ither woman was able, or likely to have. Women are queer creatures, but, Oh, dear me, what a weary world it would be without them!"

And when Maria came down stairs in a scarlet gown over a white silk petticoat, a string of gold beads round her neck, and her hair dressed high and fastened with a gold comb, he was charmed afresh. He rose with the gallantry of a young man, to get her a chair, but she made him sit down and brought a stool to his side, and nestled so close to him that he put his arm across her pretty shoulders. And it added greatly to his satisfaction that Neil came suddenly in, and discovered them in this affectionate attitude.

"One o' the compensations o' auld age," he said in happy explanation. "Here is your niece, Maria Semple, Neil; and proud you may be o' her!"—and Maria rose, and made her uncle a sweeping courtesy, and then offered him her hand and her cheek. The

young man gave her a warm welcome, and yet at the same moment wondered what changes the little lady would bring to the house. For he had sense and experience enough to know that a girl so attractive would irresistibly draw events to her.

In two or three days the excitement of her advent was of necessity put under restraint. Age loves moderation in all things, and Maria began to feel the still, stately house less interesting than the schoolroom. Whigs and Tories, however unequally, divided that ground, and the two parties made that quarrel the outlet for all their more feminine dislikes. Her last weeks at school had also been weeks full of girlish triumphs; for she was not only receiving a new wardrobe of an elaborate kind, but she was permitted to choose it; to have interviews with mantua-makers and all kinds of tradespeople; and above all, she was going to New York. And New York at that time was invested with all the romance of a mediæval city. It was the center around which the chief events of the war revolved. Within her splendid mansions the officers of King George feasted, and danced, and planned warlike excursions; and in her harbor great fleets were anchored whose mission was to subjugate the whole Southern seaboard. This of itself was an interesting situation, but how much more so, when Whig and Tory alike knew, that just over the western shore every hilltop, and every lofty tree held an American sentinel, while Washington himself, amid the fastnesses of New Jersey, watched with unerring sagacity and untiring patience the slightest military movement on Manhattan Island.

Thus, the possibilities and probabilities of her expected change of life had made her the envy of romantic girls; for all of them, no matter what their political faith, had their own conception of the great things which might be achieved in a city full of military and naval officers. It was the subject on which conversation was always interesting, and often provocative; thus, in the very last talk she had with her schoolmates, one little Tory maid said:

"O, the dear officers! How delightful it will be to dance with brave men so magnificently dressed in scarlet and gold! How I wish that I was you, Maria!"

"O, the hateful creatures!" ejaculated another girl of different opinions. "I would not dance a step with one of them; but if I did, I should be saying to myself all the time: very soon my fine fellow, some brave man in homespun blue will kill you."

"If I was Maria," said another, "and had a British officer for my servant, I would coax him to tell me what General Clinton was going to do; and then I would send word to General Washington."

"O, you mean girl!" answered Maria, "would you be a spy?"

"Yes, I would."

"And so would I!"

"And I!"

"And I!"

"And I!" And then an equal chorus of "What a shame! Just like Whigs!"

Maria missed these encounters. She saw that her grandmother usually deprecated political conversation, and that her uncle and grandfather did not in-

clude her in the discussion of any public event. On the fourth day she began to feel herself of less importance than she approved; and then there followed naturally the demoralizing luxury of self-pity:

"Because I am a girl, and a very young girl, no one appears to think I have common sense. I am as loyal to the King as any one. I wish grandmother would speak out. I believe she is a Whig. Uncle Neil said he would take me to some entertainments; he has not done so. I am not tired—that is just an excuse—I want to go out and I want to see Agnes. I will not give up Agnes—no one, no one shall make me—she is part of my heart! No, I will not give up Agnes; her father may be a saddler—and a Methodist—I am above noticing such things. I will love who I like—about my friends I will not yield an inch—I will not!"

She was busy tatting to this quite unnecessary tirade of protestations and her grandmother noticed the passionate jerk of the shuttle emphasizing her thoughts. "What is vexing you, dearie?" she asked.

"Oh, I am wretched about Agnes," she answered. "I am afraid grandfather has been rude in some way."

"You needna be afraid on that ground, Maria; your grandfather is never rude where women are concerned."

"But he is unkind. If he was not, there could be no objections to my calling on Agnes."

"Is it not her place to call on you? She is at home—born and bred in New York—you are

a stranger here. She is older than you are; she seems to have assumed some kind of care or oversight——"

"She has been my guardian angel."

"Then I think she ought to be looking after a desolate bairn like you; one would think you had neither kith nor kin near you, Maria." Madame spoke with an air of offense or injury, and as the words were uttered, the door was softly moved inward, and Agnes Bradley entered.

She courtesied to Madame, and then stretched out her hands to Maria. The girl rose with a cry of joy, and all her discontent was gone in a moment. Madame could not forget so easily; in fact, her sense of unkindness was intensified by the unlooked-for entrance of its cause. But there was no escaping the influence of Agnes. She brought the very atmosphere of peace into the room with her. In ten minutes she was sitting between Madame and Maria, and both appeared to be alike happy in her society. She did not speak of the war, or the soldiers, or the frightful price of food and fuel, or the wicked extravagance of the Tory ladies in dress and entertainments, or even of the unendurable impudence of the negro slaves. She talked of Maria, and of the studies she ought to continue, and of Madame's flowers and needlework, and a sweet feeling of rest from all the fretful life around was insensibly diffused. In a short time Madame felt herself to be under the same spell as her granddaughter, and she looked at the charmer with curious interest; she wondered what kind of personality this daughter of tranquility possessed.

A short scrutiny showed her a girl about nineteen years old, tall, but not very slender, with a great deal of pale brown hair above a broad forehead; with eyebrows thick and finely arched, and eyelids so transparent from constant contact with the soul that they seemed to have already become spiritual. Her eyes were dark grey, star-like, mystical, revealing—when they slowly dilated—one hardly knew what of the unseen and heavenly. Her face was oval and well shaped, but a little heavy except when the warm pallor of its complexion was suddenly transfigured from within; then showing a faint rose color quickly passing away. Her movements were all slow, but not ungraceful, and her soft voice had almost a caress in it. Yet it was not these things, one, or all of them, that made her so charmful; it was the invisible beauty in the visible, that delighted.

Without question here was a woman who valued everything at its eternal worth; who in the midst of war, sheltered life in the peace of God; and in the presence of sorrow was glad with the gladness of the angels. An hour with Agnes Bradley made Madame think more highly of her granddaughter; for surely it was a kind of virtue in Maria to love the goodness she herself could not attain unto.

Nearly two hours passed quickly away. They walked in the garden and talked of seeds, and of the green things springing from them; and down at the lily bed by the river, Madame had a sudden memory of a young girl, who had one Spring afternoon gone down there to meet her fate; and she said to Agnes—with a note of resentment still in her voice:

"A lassie I once loved dearly, came here to gather lilies, and to listen to a lover she had nae business to listen to. She would sit doubtless on the vera step you are now sitting on, Maria; and she made sorrow and suffering enough for more than one good heart; forbye putting auld friends asunder, and breeding anger where there had always been love. I hope you'll never do the like, either o' you."

"Who was she, grandmother?"

"Her name was Katherine Van Heemskirk. You'll hae heard tell o' her, Miss Bradley?"

"I saw her several times when she was here four years ago. She is very beautiful."

Madame did not answer, and Maria stepped lower and gathered a few lilies that were yet in bloom, though the time of lilies was nearly over. But Agnes turned away with Madame, and both of them were silent; Madame because she could not trust herself to begin speech on this subject, and Agnes because she divined, that for some reason, silence was in this case better than the fittest words that could be spoken.

After a short pause, Agnes said, "My home is but a quarter of a mile from here, and it is already orderly and pleasant. Will you, Madame, kindly permit Maria to come often to see me! I will help her with her studies, and she might take the little boat at the end of your garden, and row herself along the water edge until she touches the pier in our garden."

"She had better walk."

In this way the permission was granted without reserves or conditions. Madame had not thought of making any, and as soon as she realized her im-

plied approval, she was resolved to stand by it. "The lassie requires young people to consort wi'," she thought, "and better a young lass than a young lad; and if her grandfather says contrary, I must make him wiser."

With this concession the visit ended, but the girls went out of the parlor together, and stood talking for some time in the entrance hall. The parting moment, however, had to come, and Maria lifted her lips to her friend, and they were kissing each other good-bye, when Neil Semple and a young officer in the uniform of the Eighty-fourth Royal Highlanders opened the door. The picture of the two girls in their loving embrace was a momentary one, but it was flooded with the colored sunshine pouring on them from the long window of stained glass, and the men saw and acknowledged its beauty, with an involuntary exclamation of delight. Maria sheltered herself in a peal of laughter, and over the face of Agnes there came and went a quick transfiguring flush; but she instantly regained her mental poise, and with the composure of a goddess was walking toward the door, when Neil advanced, and assuming the duty of a host, walked with her down the flagged path to the garden gate. Maria and the young soldier stood in the doorway watching them; and Madame at the parlor window did the same thing, with an indescribable amazement on her face.

"It isna believable!" she exclaimed. "Neil Semple, the vera proudest o' mortals walking wi' auld Bradley's daughter! his hat in his hand too! and bowing to her! bowing to his vera knee buckles! After this, the Stuarts may come hame again, or any

other impossible thing happen. The world is turning tapsalterie, and I wonder whether I am Janet Semple, or some ither body."

But the world was all right in a few minutes; for then Neil entered the room with Maria and Captain Macpherson, and the mere sight of the young Highlandman brought oblivion of all annoyances. Madame's heart flew to her head whenever she saw the kilt and the plaid; she hastened to greet its wearer; she took his plumed bonnet from his hand, and said it was "just out o' calculation that he should go without breaking bread with them."

Captain Macpherson had no desire to go. He had seen and spoken with Maria, and she was worth staying for; besides which, a Scot in a strange land feels at home in a countryman's house. Macpherson quickly made himself so. He went with Neil to his room, and anon to the garden, and finally loosed the boat and rowed up the river, resting on the oars at the Bradley place, hoping for a glance at Agnes. But nothing was to be seen save the white house among the green trees, and the white shades gently stirring in the wind. The place was as still as a resting wheel, and the stillness infected the rowers; yet when Macpherson was in Semple's garden, the merry ring of his boyish laughter reached Madame and Maria in the house, and set their hearts beating with pleasure as they arranged the tea-table, and brought out little dishes of hoarded luxuries. And though Madame's chickens were worth three dollars each, she unhesitatingly sacrificed one to a national hero.

When the Elder came home he was equally

pleased. He loved young people, and the boyish captain with his restless, brimming life, was an element that the whole house responded to. His heart had a little quake at the abundance of the meal, but it was only a momentary reserve, and he smiled as his eyes fell on the motto carved around the wooden bread-plate—*"Spare Not! Waste Not! Want Not!"*

Madame looked very happy and handsome sitting before her tray of pretty china, and the blended aromas of fine tea and hot bread, of broiled chicken, and Indian preserves and pickles were made still more appetizing by the soft wind blowing through the open window, the perfume of the lilacs and the southernwood. Madame had kept the place at her right hand for Macpherson; and Maria sat next to him with her grandfather on her right hand, so that Neil was at his mother's left hand. Between the two young men the old lady was radiantly happy; for Macpherson was such a guest as it is a delight to honor. He eat of all Madame had prepared for him, thoroughly enjoyed it, and frankly said so. And his chatter about the social entertainments given by Generals Clinton and Tryon, Robertson and Ludlow was very pleasant to the ladies. Neil never had anything to say about these affairs, except that they were "all alike, and all stupid, and all wickedly extravagant;" and such criticism was too general to be interesting.

Very different was Macpherson's description of the last ball at General Tryon's; he could tell all its details—the reception of the company with kettle drums and trumpets—the splendid furniture of his

residence, its tapestries, carpets, and silk hangings —the music, the dancing, the feasting—the fine dressing of both men and women—all these things he described with delightful enthusiasm and a little pleasant mimicry. And when Madame asked after her acquaintances, Macpherson could tell her what poplins and lutestrings, and lace and jewels they wore. Moreover, he knew what grand dames crowded William Street in the mornings and afternoons, and what merchants had the largest display of the fashions and luxuries of Europe.

"John Ambler," he said, "is now showing a most extraordinary cargo of English silks and laces, and fine broadcloths, taken by one of Dirk Vandercliff's privateers. Really, Madame, the goods are worth looking at. I assure you our beauties lack nothing that Europe can produce."

"Yes, there is one thing the privateers canna furnish you, and that is fuel. You shivered all last winter in your splendid rooms," said the Elder.

"True," replied Macpherson. "The cold was frightful, and though General Clinton issued one proclamation after another to the farmers of Long Island to send in their wood, they did not do it."

"Why should they?" asked Madame.

"On the King's service, Madame," answered the young man with a final air.

"Vera good," retorted Madame; "but if the King wanted my forest trees for naething, I should say, 'your Majesty has plenty o' soldiers wi' little to do; let them go and cut what they want.' They wouldna waste it if they had it to cut. But the wastrie in everything is simply sinful, and I canna think where

the Blacks and Vanderlanes, and all the other 'Vans' you name—and whom I never heard tell of in our kirk—get the money."

"Privateering!" said Macpherson with a gay laugh. "Who would not be a roving privateer? I have myself longings for the life. I have thoughts of joining Vandercliff's fleet."

"You are just leeing, young man," interrupted Madame. "It would be a thing impossible. The Macphersons have nae salt water in their blood. Could you fling awa' your tartans for a sailor's tarry coat and breeches? How would you look if you did? And you would feel worse than you looked."

Macpherson glanced at his garb with a smile of satisfaction. "I am a Macpherson," he answered, proudly, "and I would not change the colors of my regiment for a royal mantle; but privateering is no small temptation. On the deck of a privateer you may pick up gold and silver."

"That is not very far from the truth," said Neil. "In the first year of the war the rebel privateers took two hundred and fifty West Indiamen, valued at nearly two millions of pounds, and Mr. Morris complained that the Eastern states cared for nothing but privateering."

"Weel, Morris caught the fever himself," said the Elder. "I have been told he made nearly four hundred thousand dollars in the worst year the rebel army ever had."

"Do the rebels call that patriotism?" asked Macpherson.

"Yes," answered the Elder, "from a Whig point of view it is vera patriotic; what do you think, Neil?"

"If I was a Whig," answered Neil, "I should certainly own privateers. Without considering the personal advantage, privateering brings great riches into the country; it impoverishes the enemy, and it adds enormously to the popularity of the war. The men who have hitherto gone to the Arctic seas for whales, find more wealthy and congenial work in capturing English ships."

"And when men get money by wholesale high-seas robbery——"

"Privateering, Madame," corrected Macpherson.

"Weel, weel, give it any name you like—what I want to say is, that money got easy goes easy."

"In that, Madame, you are correct. While we were in Philadelphia that city was the scene of the maddest luxury. While the rebels were begging money from France to feed their starving army at Valley Forge, every kind of luxury and extravagance ran riot in Philadelphia. At one entertainment there was eight hundred pounds spent in pastry alone."

"Stop, Macpherson!" cried Madame, "I will not hear tell o' such wickedness," and she rose with the words, and the gentlemen went into the parlor to continue their conversation.

Madame had been pleased with her granddaughter's behavior. She had not tittered, nor been vulgarly shy or affected, nor had she intruded her opinions or feelings among those of her elders; and yet her self-possession, and her expressive face had been full of that charm which showed her to be an interested and a comprehending listener. Now, however, Madame wished her to talk, and she was an-

noyed when she did not do so. It was only natural that she should express some interest in the bright young soldier, and her silence concerning him Madame regarded as assumed indifference. At last she condescended to the leading question:

"What do you think o' Captain Macpherson, Maria?"

"I do not know, grandmother."

"He is a very handsome lad. It did my heart good to see his bright face."

"His face is covered with freckles."

"Freckles! Why not? He has been brought up in the wind and the sunshine, and not in a boarding-school, or a lady's parlor."

"Freckles are not handsome, however, grandmother."

Madame would not dally with half-admissions, and she retorted sharply:

"Freckles are the handsomest thing about a man; they are only the human sunshine tint; the vera same sunshine that colored the roses and ripened the wheat gave the lad the golden-brown freckles o' rich young life. Freckles! I consider them an improvement to any one. If you had a few yoursel' you would be the handsomer for them."

"Grandmother!"

"Yes, and your friend likewise. She has scarce a mite o' color o' any kind; a little o' the human sunshine tint—the red and gold on her cheeks—and she might be better looking."

"Better looking! Why, grandmother, Agnes was the beauty of the school."

"Schoolgirls are poor judges o' beauty. She has

a wonderfu' pleasant way with her, but that isn't beauty."

"I thought you liked her, I am so sorry and disappointed."

"She is weel enough—in her way. There are plenty o' girls not as pleasant; but she is neither Venus, nor Helen o' Troy. I was speaking o' Captain Macpherson; when he stood in the garden with your uncle Neil, his hand on his sword and the wind blowing his golden hair——"

"Grandmother! His hair is red."

"It is naething o' the kind, Maria. It is a bonnie golden-brown. It may, perhaps, have a cast o' red, but only enough to give it color. And he has a kindly handsome face, sweet-eyed and fearless."

"I did not notice his eyes. He seems fearless, and he is certainly good-tempered. Have you known him a long time, grandmother?"

"I never saw him before this afternoon," the old lady answered wearily. She had become suddenly tired. Maria's want of enthusiasm chilled her. She could not tell whether the girl was sincere or not. Women generally have two estimates of the men they meet; one which they acknowledge, one which they keep to themselves.

When the gentlemen returned to the sitting-room a young negro was lighting the fire, and Macpherson looked at him with attention. "A finely built fellow," he said, when the slave had left the room; "such men ought to make good fighters." Then turning to Madame he added, "Captain de Lancey lost four men, and Mr. Bayard five men last week. They were sent across the river to cut wood and they

managed to reach the rebel camp. We have knowledge that there is a full regiment of them there now."

"They are fighting for their personal freedom," said the Elder, "and who wouldna fight for that? Washington has promised it, if they fight to the end o' the war."

"They have a good record already," said Macpherson.

"I have nae doubt o' it," answered the Elder. "Fighting would come easier than wood cutting, no to speak o' the question o' freedom. I heard a sough o' rumor about them and the Hessians; true, or not, I can't say."

"It is true. They beat back the Hessians three times in one engagement."

"I'm glad o' it," said Madame, "slaves are good enough to fight hired human butchers."

"O, you know, Madame, the Hessians are mercenaries; they make arms a profession." He spoke with a languid air of defense; the Hessians were not of high consideration in his opinion, but Madame answered with unusual warmth:

"A profession! Well, it isn't a respectable one in their hands—men selling themselves to fight they care not whom, or for what cause. If a man fights for his country he is her soldier and her protector; if he sells himself to all and sundry, he is worth just what he sells himself for, and the black slave fighting for his freedom is a gentleman beside him." Then, before any one could answer her tart disparagement, she opened a little Indian box, and threw on the table a pack of cards.

"There's some paper kings for you to play wi'," she said, "and neither George nor Louis has a title to compare wi' them—kings and knaves! Ancient tyrants, and like ithers o' their kind, they would trick the warld awa' at every game but for some brave ace," and the ace of hearts happening to be in her hand she flung it defiantly down on the top of the pack; and that with an air of confidence and triumph that was very remarkable.

With the help of these royalties and some desultory conversation on the recent alliance of France with the rebels, the evening passed away. Madame sat quiet in the glow of the fire, and Maria, as Neil's partner, enlivened the game with many bewitching airs and graces she had not known she possessed, until this opportunity called them forth. And whatever Macpherson gained at cards he lost in another direction; for the little schoolgirl, he had at first believed himself to be patronizing, reversed the situation. He became embarrassed by a realization of her beauty and cleverness; and the sweet old story began to tell itself in his heart—the story that comes no one knows whence, and commences no one knows how. In that hour of winning and losing he first understood how charming Maria Semple was.

The new feeling troubled him; he wished to be alone with it, and the ardent pleasure of his arrival had cooled. The Elder and his wife were tired, and Neil seemed preoccupied and did not exert himself to restore the tone of the earlier hours; so the young officer felt it best to make his adieu. Then, the farewell in a measure renewed the joy of meeting; he was asked to come again, "to come whenever he

wanted to come," said Madame, with a smile of motherly kindness. And when Maria, with a downward and upward glance laid her little hand in his, that incident made the moment wonderful, and he felt that not to come again would be a great misfortune.

Maria was going to her room soon afterward but Neil detained her. "Can you sit with me a little while, Maria?" he asked; "or are you also sleepy?"

"I am not the least weary, uncle; and I never was wider awake in my life. I will read to you or copy for you——"

"Come and talk to me. The fire still burns. It is a pity to leave its warmth. Sit down here. I have never had a conversation with you. I do not know my niece yet, and I want to know her."

Maria was much flattered. Neil's voice had a tone in it that she had never before heard. He brought her a shawl to throw around her shoulders, a footstool for her feet, and drawing a small sofa before the fire, seated himself by her side. Then he talked with her about her early life; about her father and mother, and Mrs. Charlton, and without asking one question about Agnes Bradley led her so naturally to the subject, and so completely round and through it, that he had learned in an hour all Maria could tell concerning the girl whose presence and appearance had that day so powerfully attracted him. He was annoyed when he heard her name, and annoyed at her pronounced Methodism, which was evidently of that early type, holding it a sin not to glory in the scorn of those who derided it. Yet he could not help being touched by Maria's

enthusiastic description of the girl's sweet godliness.

"You know, uncle," she said, "Agnes's religion is not put on; it is part of Agnes; it is Agnes. Girls find one another out, but all the girls loved Agnes. We were ashamed to be ill-natured, or tell untruths, or do mean things when she was there. And if you heard her sing, uncle, you would feel as if the heavens had opened, and you could see angels."

Now there is no man living who does not at some time dream of a good woman—a woman much better than himself—upon his hearthstone. Neil felt in that hour this divine longing; and he knew also, that the thing had befallen him which he had vowed never would befall him again. Without resistance, without the desire to resist, he had let the vision of Agnes Bradley fill his imagination; he had welcomed it, and he knew that it would subjugate his heart—that it had already virtually done so. For Maria's descriptions of the pretty trivialities of their school life was music and wine to his soul. He was captivated by her innocent revelations, and the tall girl with her saintly pallor and star-like eyes was invisibly present to him. He had the visionary sense, the glory and the dream of love, and he longed to realize this vision. Therefore he was delighted when he heard that Maria had permission to continue her studies under the direction of her friend. It was an open door to him.

It was at this point that Maria made her final admission: "I am obliged to tell you, uncle, that I am sure Agnes is a Whig." This damaging item in her idol's character Maria brought out with depre-

cating apologies and likelihood of change, "not a bad Whig, uncle; she is so gentle, and she hates war, and so she feels so sorry for the poor Americans who are suffering so much, because, you know, they think they are right. Then her father is a Tory, and she is very fond of her father, and very proud of him, and she will now be under his influence, and of course do what he tells her—only—only——"

"Only what, Maria? You think there is a difficulty; what is it?"

"Her lover. I am almost certain he is a rebel."

"Has she a lover? She is very young—you must be mistaken?" He spoke so sharply Maria hardly knew his voice, and she considered it best to hesitate a little, so she answered in a dubious manner:

"I suppose he is her lover. The girls all thought so. He sent her letters, and he sometimes came to see her; and then she seemed so happy."

"A young man?"

"Yes, a very young man."

"A soldier?"

"I think, more likely, he was a sailor. I never asked Agnes. You could not ask Agnes things, as you did other girls."

"I understand that."

"He wore plain clothes, but all of us were sure he was a sailor; and once we saw Agnes watching some ships as far as she could see them, and he had called on her that day."

Neil did not answer her conjecture. He rose and stood silently on the hearth, his dark eyes directed outward, as if he was calling up the vision of the

sea, and the ships and the girl watching them. For the first time Maria realized the personal attractiveness of her uncle. "He is not old," she thought, "and he is handsomer than any one I ever saw. Why has he not got married before this?" And as she speculated on this question, Neil let his eyes fall upon the dead fire and in a melancholy voice said:

"Maria, my dear, it is very late. I did not remember—you have given me two pleasant hours. Good-night, child."

He spoke with restraint, coldly and wearily. He was not aware of it, for his mind was full of thoughts well-nigh unspeakable, and Maria felt their influence, though they had not been named. She went away depressed and silent, like one who has suddenly discovered they were no longer desired.

Neil speedily put out the lights, and went to the solitude his heart craved. He was not happy; but doubt and fear and love's first food. For another hour he sat motionless, wondering how this woman, whom he had not in any way summoned, had taken such possession of him. For not yet had it been revealed to him, that "love is always a great invisible presence," and that in his case, Agnes Bradley was but its material revelation.

CHAPTER III.

LIFE IN THE CAPTIVE CITY.

At this time in New York, John Bradley was a man of considerable importance. He was not only a native of the city, but many generations of Bradleys had been born, and lived, and died in the wide, low house close to the river bank, not far north of old Trinity. They were originally a Yorkshire family who had followed the great Oliver Cromwell from Marston Moor to Worcester, and who, having helped to build the Commonwealth of England, refused to accept the return of royalty. Even before Charles the Second assumed the crown, Ezra Bradley and his six sons had landed in New York. They were not rich, but they had gold sufficient to build a home, and to open near the fort a shop for the making and repairing of saddlery.

Ever since that time this trade had been the distinctive occupation of the family, and the John Bradley who represented it in the year 1779, had both an inherited and a trained capability in the craft. No one in all America could make a saddle comparable with Bradley's; the trees were of his own designing, and the leather work unequalled in strength and beauty. In addition to this important faculty, he was a veterinary surgeon of great skill, and possessed

some occult way of managing ungovernable horses, which commended itself peculiarly to officers whose mounts were to be renewed frequently from any available source. And never had his business been so lucrative as at the present date, for New York was full of mounted military during the whole period of the war, and enormous prices were willingly paid for the fine saddlery turned out of the workshop of John Bradley.

Contrary to all the traditions of his family, he had positively taken the part of the King, and at the very commencement of the national quarrel had shown the red ribbon of loyalty to England. His wife dying at this time, he sent his daughter to a famous boarding-school in Boston, and his son to the great dissenting academy in Gloucester, England; then he closed his house and lived solitarily in very humble fashion above his workroom and shop. In this way, he believed himself to have provided for the absolute safety of his two children; the boy was out of the war circle; the thundering drum and screaming fife could not reach him in the cloistered rooms of the Doddridge School; and as for Agnes, Mrs. Charlton's house was as secure as a convent; he had no fear that either English or American soldiers would molest a dwelling full of schoolgirls. And John Bradley could keep the door of his mouth; and he believed that a man who could do that might pursue a trade so necessary as his, with an almost certain degree of safety.

In appearance he was a short, powerful-looking man with tranquil, meditating eyes and a great talent for silence; an armed soul dwelling in a strong

body. Some minds reflect, shift, argue, and are like the surface of a lake; but John Bradley's mind was like stubborn clay; when once impressed it was sure to harden and preserve the imprint through his life, and perhaps the other one. His Methodism was of this character, and he never shirked conversation on this subject; he was as ready to tell his experience to General Howe or General Clinton as to the members of his own class meeting; for his heart was saturated with the energy of his faith; he had the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

On politics he would not talk; he said, "public affairs were in wiser hands than his, and that to serve God and be diligent in business, was the length and breadth of his commission." His shop was a place where many men and many minds met, and angry words were frequently thrown backward and forward there; yet his needle never paused an instant for them. Only once had he been known to interfere; it was on a day when one of De Lancey's troop drew his sword against a boyish English ensign almost at his side. He stopped them with his thread half drawn out, and said sternly:

"If you two fools are in a hurry for death, and the judgment after death, there are more likely places to kill each other than my shop," and the words were cold as ice and sharp as steel, and the men went out rebuked and checked, and washed away their hot temper in wine instead of blood. For the vision of death, and the judgment after death, which Bradley's words and manner had evoked, was not to be faced at that hour. Yet, withal, Bradley was rather

a common-looking man, ill-mannered and rough as hemp to the generality; but not so where childhood or calamity appealed to his strength or forbearance. In other respects, General Howe had, not inaptly, described him as "very unlike other men when at chapel, but not much so, when among horses in the stable, or selling saddles in the shop."

This was the man who came up from the waterside early one morning in the beginning of July, singing Dr. Watts' lyrical dream of heaven:

"There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign."

His voice was strong and melodious, and it was evident that Agnes had inherited her charming vocal power from him. He did not cease as he entered the house, but continued his hymn until he was in the little sitting-room, and Agnes finished the verse with him:

"And see the Canaan that we love,
With unbeclouded eyes."

He sat down to breakfast with the heavenly vision in his heart, and reluctantly let it pass away. But his spiritual nature had hands as well as wings, and he felt also the stress of the daily labor waiting him.

"The expedition leaves for the Connecticut coast to-day," he said. "General Clinton is determined to strike a blow at the people in New Haven, and Fairfield, and New London."

"Well, father? What do you say to that?"

"I say it is better they should be struck down than that they should lie down."

"Matthews has but just returned from ravaging

the river counties of Virginia, and Clinton from Stony Point. Have they not made misery enough for a little while? Who is going with the Connecticut expedition?"

"Tryon, and he goes to do mischief with the joy of an ape."

"I heard trumpets sounding and men mustering, as I was dressing myself."

"Trumpets may sound, and not to victory, Agnes. Fire and pillage are cowardly arms; but I heard Tryon say, any stick was good enough to beat a dog with, and all who differ from Tryon are dogs. Vile work! Vile work! And yet all this does not keep New York from dancing and drinking, and racing, and gambling, and trading; nor yet New York women from painting and dressing themselves as if there were no such persons as King George and George Washington."

"Yes, father, a great many of our best families are very poor."

"Those not employed by the government, or those who are not contractors or privateers, are whipped and driven to the last pinch by poverty. Ah, Agnes, remember New York before this war began, its sunny streets shaded with trees, and its busy, happy citizens talking, laughing, smoking, trading, loving and living through every sense they had at the same time. Now there is nothing but covert ill-will and suspicion. Our violent passions have not cured our mean ones; to the common list of rogueries, we have only added those of contractors and commissioners."

"I think war is the most terrible calamity that can befall a people, father."

"The despair of subjugated souls would be worse."

"Do they never doubt you, father?"

"Howe never did. That amiable, indolent officer might have liked me all the more if he had doubted me. Clinton is a different man; and I think he may have thought my loyalty to royalty lukewarm, for he sent for me on the King's birthday, and after some talk about a horse and saddle, he said, "Mr. Bradley, it is the King's birthday; shall we drink his Majesty's health?' And I answered him, 'if it please you, General.' So he filled a glass with Portugal wine for me, and then filling one for himself raised it, and waited for me to speak. There were several officers present, and I lifted my glass and said, 'To King George the Third! God bless him, and make him and all his officers good John Wesley Methodists!' "

"Then, father?"

"Clinton put down his glass with a ringing guffaw, and the rest followed him. Only one bit of a beardless boy spoke, and he said: 'you think, Bradley, Methodism might make his Majesty a better king?' And I answered, 'I am not here to judge his Majesty's kingship. I think it would make him and all present, better and happier men.' I did not try to go away or shirk questions; I looked squarely in their faces until General Clinton said, 'Very good, Bradley. You will remember Saladin and the new saddle for him'; and I answered, 'I will see to it at once, General.' So I went out then, and I think they were not all sure of me; but they cannot do without me, and they know it is better to put their

doubts out of inquiry. Wise men obey necessity, and that is true for them as well as for me. Agnes, I want to know something about that little girl of Semple's? I don't like her coming here day after day. She will be seeing or hearing something she ought not to see or hear. Women are dangerous in politics, for, as a rule, politics either find or leave them vixens."

"Maria is to be trusted."

"You can not be sure. She is passionate, and though a woman in a temper may not intend to burn any one, she pokes the fire and makes a blaze and sets others looking and wondering. I can tell you of many such women in New York; they think ill of their neighbor, and the thoughts get to their tongues, and before they know the mischief is done. Then, like the wolf in the fable, they thank God they are not ferocious. Oh, no! They have only loosed the dogs of war and left others to set them worrying."

"How you do run on, father! And not one word you have said fits the little Maria, no, nor any one of the Semples. Indeed, I am sure Madame is as true a patriot as you could find anywhere."

"The old man is as bitter a royalist as I could find anywhere."

"He is, however, a good old man. Last Monday night, when you had to go to the leaders' meeting, I walked home with Maria and stayed to tea there. And after tea Madame asked me to sing a hymn, and I sang the one you were singing this morning, and when I had finished, the Elder said, 'Now, then, we will supplement Isaac Watts with the Apostle John'; and he opened the Bible and read aloud John's vision

of 'the land of pure delight' from the twenty-first of Revelation; then standing up, he asked us all to join in the prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ. And we stood up with him and said to 'Our Father which is in heaven,' the words he taught us. I felt it to be a very precious few minutes."

"I have nothing to say against such experiences, Agnes. If people would stick to what Christ says, there might be only one creed and one church; it is Peter and Paul that make disputing. But if you go to Semple's house do not stop after sunset. There are bad men about."

"Mr. Neil Semple walked home with me."

"Oh! Mr. Neil Semple! And what had he to say?"

"Very little. He praised my singing, he said it went to his heart; and he spoke about the moon, and the perfume of the locust flowers. I think that was all."

"The moon and the locust flowers! What does Mr. Neil Semple know about the moon and the locust flowers? And he spoke very little! He can talk fast enough when he is in court, and well paid for it. He is a proud man—ill-tempered, too, I should think."

"I am sure he is not ill-tempered. He is as sweet as a child to his father and mother; and Maria says many pleasant things about him."

"Let him pass for what he is worth; but remember always this thing, Agnes, I am trusting my life in your hands. If you inadvertently repeated even what I have said this morning, I should be hard put to answer it."

"You know well that I would die rather than reveal anything you said to me. My life for yours, father!"

"I trust you as my own soul. You are an inexpressible comfort to me. I can speak to you. I can open my heart to you. I can get relief and sympathy from you. Your coming home makes me a hundred-fold safer. If your brother with his hot temper and young imprudences had been here, no one knows what would have happened before this. I thank God continually that he is so far out of the way. Has he left school yet?"

"School does not close until June."

"Then he will go directly to Doctor Brudenel in London?"

"That was your instruction to him."

"When did you have a letter from him?"

"It is nearly a month since."

"When will you write to him next?"

"I write to him every opportunity I have."

"Does he need money? Young men are often extravagant."

"He has never named money to me. He is well and happy."

"Tell him he must not come home, not think of coming home till I give him permission. Tell him that his being away from home is my great comfort. Make that plain to him, Agnes, my great comfort. Tell him he must stay in London till a man can speak his mind safely in New York, whatever his mind may be."

"I will tell him all, father."

Then Bradley went to his shop and his daughter

sat down to consider with herself. Many persons stimulate or regulate thought in movement and find a positive assistance to their mental powers in action of some kind, but Agnes had the reverse of this temperament. She needed quiet, so closing the door of her room she sat still, recalling, reviewing, and doing her best to anticipate events. There were certain things which must be revealed to Maria, wholly, or in part, if she continued to visit the house, and Agnes saw not how to prevent those visits. Nor did she wish to prevent them; she loved Maria and delighted in her companionship. They had many acquaintances and events in common to talk about, and she was also interested in Maria's life, which was very different to her own. She felt, too, that her influence was necessary and valuable to the young girl, suddenly thrown into the midst of what Agnes regarded as sinful and dangerous society. And then into this process of self-examination there drifted another form—the stately, rather sombre, but altogether kindly personality of Neil Semple. It was linked with Maria, she could not separate the two; and as intrusion involved some heart-searching she was not inclined to, she rather promptly decided the question without any further prudential considerations, and as she did so Maria called her.

She answered the call gladly. It was to her one of those leadings on which she spiritually relied, and her face was beaming with love and pleasure as she went down stairs to her friend. Maria was standing in the middle of the small parlor, most beautifully arrayed in an Indian muslin, white as snow and lustrously fine, as only Dacca looms could

weave it. Her shoulders were covered with a little cape of the same material, ruffled and laced and fastened with pink ribbons, and on her head was a bewitching gypsy hat tied under her chin with bows of the same color. Her uncle stood at her side, smiling with grave tolerance at her girlish pride in her dress, and the pretty airs with which she exhibited it to Agnes.

"Am I not handsome?" she cried. "Am I not dressed in the most perfect taste? Why do you not say as Miss Robinson is sure to say—'La, child, you are adorable!' "

Agnes fell quite naturally into her friend's excited mood, and in the happiest tone of admiring mimicry, repeated the words dictated. She made the most perfect contrast to Maria; her pale blue gown of simple material and simple fashion was without ornament of any kind, except its large falling collar of white muslin embroidery; but the long, unbroken line of the skirt seemed to Neil Semple the most fitting, the only fitting, garment he had ever seen on any woman.

"Its modesty and simplicity is an instinct," he thought; "and I have this morning seen a woman clothed by her raiment. Now I understand the difference between being dressed and clothed. Maria is dressed, Agnes is clothed; her garments interpret her."

He was lifted up by his love for her; and her calico gown became a royal robe in his imagination. Every time he saw her she appeared to have been adorned for that time only. It was a delightful thing for him to watch her tenderness and pride

in Maria. It was motherly and sisterly, and without a thought of envy, and he trembled with delight when she turned her sweet, affectionate face to his for sympathy in it. And really this morning Agnes might reasonably have given some of her admiring interest to Maria's escort. He was undeniably handsome. His suit of fine, dark cloth, his spotless lawn ruffles, his long, light sword, his black beaver in his hand, were but fitting adjuncts to a noble face, graven with many experiences and alight with the tender glow of love and the steady fire of intellectual power and purpose.

He did not stay at this time many minutes, but the girls watched him to the garden gate and shared the courtly salute of his adieu there. "Is he not the most graceful and beautiful of men?" asked Maria.

"Indeed he is very handsome," replied Agnes.

"There is not an officer in New York fit to latch his shoe buckles."

"Then why do you dress so splendidly, only to show yourself to them?"

"Well, Agnes, see how *they* dress. As we were coming here we met men in all the colors of the rainbow; they were rattling swords and spurs, and tossing their heads like war horses scenting the battle afar off."

"You are quoting the Bible, Maria."

"Uncle did it first. You don't suppose I thought of that. We passed a regiment of Hessians with their towering brass-fronted helmets, their yellow breeches, and black gaiters; really, Agnes, they were grand-looking men."

"Very," answered Agnes, scornfully. "I have seen them standing like automatons, taking both the commands and the canes of their officers. Very grand-looking indeed!"

"You need not be angry at the poor fellows. It must be very disagreeable for them to be caned in public and not dare to move an eyelash or utter a word of protest."

"Men that will suffer such things are no better than the beasts of the field; not as good, for the beasts do speak in their way with hoofs, or horns, or teeth, or claws, and that to some purpose, when their sense of justice is outraged."

"It is all military discipline, you know, Agnes. And you must allow, the regiments make fine appearances. I dare say these Hessians have to be caned—most men have, in one way or another. Uncle is coming back for me this afternoon. We are going to see the troops leaving; it will be a fine sight. I told uncle you might like to go with us, and he said he would ask you, but he did not."

"He had more grace granted him, Maria."

"I think he is a little afraid of you, Agnes."

"Nothing of the kind. He had sense enough to understand I would not go." Then, without further thought or preliminary she said: "Sit down here beside me, Maria, I have something very important to say to you. I know that I can perfectly trust you, but I want to hear you tell me so. Can you keep a secret inviolate and sure, Maria?"

"If the secret is yours, Agnes, neither in life nor in the hour of death would I tell it."

"If you were questioned——"

"I should be stupid and dumb; if it was your secret, fire could not burn it out of me."

"I believe you. Many times in Boston you must have known that a young man called on me. You may have seen his face."

"None of the girls saw his face but Sally Laws; we all knew that he called on you. I should recognize his figure and his walk anywhere, but his face I never saw. Sally said he was as handsome as Apollo."

"Such nonsense! He has an open, bright, strong countenance, but there is nothing Greek about him, nothing at all. He is an American, and he loves his native land, and would give his life for her freedom."

"And he will come here to see you now?"

"Yes, but my father must not know it."

"I thought you were always so against anything being done unknown to our parents. When I wanted to write good-bye to Teddy Bowen you would not let me."

"I expected you to remind me of this, and at present I can give you no explanation. But I tell you positively that I am doing right. Can you take my word for it?"

"I believe in you, Agnes, as if you were the Bible. I know you will only do right."

"All that you see or hear or are told about this person must be to you as if you had dreamed a dream, and you must forget that you ever had it."

"I have said that I would be faithful. Darling Agnes, you know that you may trust me."

"Just suppose that my friend should be seen, and

that my father should be told," she was silent a moment in consideration of such an event, and Maria impulsively continued:

"In that case I would say it was my friend."

"That would not be the truth."

"But he might be my friend, we might have become friends, not as he is your friend, nothing like that, just a friend. Are you very fond of him, Agnes?"

"I love him as my own life."

"And he loves you in that way?"

"He loves me! Oh, yes, Maria, he loves me! even as I love him."

"Sweetest Agnes, thank you for telling me. I will see what you tell me to see, and hear what you tell me to hear; that, and that only. I will be as true to you as your own heart."

"I am sure you will. Some day you shall know all. Now, we will say no more until there is a reason; everything is so uncertain. Tell me about the rout last night."

"It was at Governor Robertson's. His daughter called and asked me to honor them with my company; and grandmother said I ought to go, and uncle Neil said I ought to go—so I went. There was a great time dressing me, but I made a fine appearance when it was done. I wore my silver-tissue gown, and grandmother loaned me her pearl necklace. She told me how many generations of Gordon ladies had worn it, and I felt uncanny as she clasped it round my throat. I wondered if they knew——"

"You should not wonder about such things. Did you dance much?"

"I had the honor to dance with many great people. Every gentleman danced one minuet with his partner, and then began cotillon and allemand dances; and there were some songs sung by Major Andre, and a fine supper at midnight. It was two o'clock when I got home."

"Tell me who you talked with."

"Oh, everybody, Agnes; but I liked most of all, the lady who stays with the Robertsons—Mrs. Gordon; her husband was with Burgoyne and is a prisoner yet. She was very pleasant to me; indeed, she told Uncle Neil 'I was the perfectest creature she had ever seen,' and that she was 'passionately taken with me.' She insisted that I should be brought to her, and talked to me about my dress and my lovers, and also about grandfather and grandmother."

"She lived with them once, and helped to make great sorrow in their house."

"I know. Grandmother does not forgive her."

"And your uncle?"

"He is very civil to her, for she is vastly the fashion. She played cards all the evening, and called me to her side more often than I liked. She said I brought her luck. I don't think she approved of my dancing so often with Captain Macpherson. she asked questions about him, and smiled in a way that was not pleasant, and that made me praise the Highlander far more than I meant to, and she barely heard me to the end of my talk ere she turned back to her cards, and as she did so, said: 'What a paragon in tartan! Before this holy war there may have been such men, but if you are a good child pray that a husband may drop down from heaven for you;

there are no good ones bred here now.' Then every one near began to protest, and she spread out her cards and cried, 'Who leads? Diamonds are trump.' When she called me next, she was sweeping the sovereigns into her reticule; and Governor Ludlow said she was Fortune's favorite, and uncle Neil said, 'I see, Madame, that you now play for gold,' and I think uncle meant something that she understood, for she looked queerly at him for a moment, and then answered, 'Yes I play for money now. I confess it. Why not? If you take away that excuse, the rest is sinning without temptation.' She is so well bred, Agnes, and she speaks with such an air, you are forced to notice and remember what she says."

Agnes was troubled to think of the innocent child in such society, and without obtruding counsel, yet never restraining it when needful, she did her best to keep Maria's conscience quick and her heart right. It was evident that she regarded the whole as a kind of show, whose color and sound and movement attracted her; yet even so, this show was full of temptation to a girl who had no heart care and no lack of anything necessary for the pride of life.

This afternoon the half-camp and half-garrison condition of New York was very conspicuous. All was military bustle and excitement; trumpets were calling, drums beating, and regiments parading the streets once devoted to peaceful commerce and domestic happiness. Royalist merchants stood in the doors of their shops exchanging snuff-box compliments and flattering prophecies concerning the expedition about to leave—prophecies which did not

hide the brooding fear in their eyes or the despondent shake of the head when sure of a passer's sympathy. And a sensitive observer would have felt the gloom, the shame and sorrow that no one dared to express; for, just because no one dared to express it, the very stones of the streets found a voice that spoke to every heart. The bitterest royalist remembered. All the riot of military music could not drown the memory of sounds once far more familiar —the cheerful greeting of men in the market place, and all the busy, happy tumult of prosperous trade; the laughter and chatter of joyful women and children, and the music of the church bells above the pleasant streets.

Neil was silent and unhappy; Maria full of the excitement of the passing moment. They sat in the open window of Neil's office and watched company after company march to the warships in which they were to embark: Grenadiers of Auspach with their towering black caps and sombre military air; brass-fronted Hessians; gaudy Waldeckers; English corps glittering in scarlet pomp; and Highlanders loaded with weapons, but free and graceful in their flowing contour. On these latter especially, both Neil and Maria fixed their interest. Who can say how long national feeling, expatriated, may live? Neil leaped to his feet as the plaided men came in sight. Their bagpipes made him drunk with emotion; they played on his heartstrings and called up centuries of passionate feelings. He clasped his sword unconsciously; his hand trembled with that magnetic attraction for iron that soldiers know. At that moment he said proudly to his soul, "Thou also

art of Scottish birth!" and a vision of hills and straths and of a tossing ocean filled his spiritual sight.

Maria's interest was of the present and was centered on the young captain walking at the head of his company; for Quentin Macpherson was a born soldier, and whatever he might lack in a ball-room, he lacked nothing at the head of his men. His red hair flowing from under his plaided bonnet was the martial color; it seemed proper to his stern face and to the musket and bayonet, the broadsword, dirk and pistols which he wore or carried with the ease and grace of long usage. He stepped so proudly to the strains of "Lochaber;" he looked so brave and so naturally full of authority that Maria was, for the moment, quite subjugated. She had told him on the previous night, at what place she was to view the embarkment; and she detected the first movement which showed him to be on the watch for her.

This fleeting pleasure of exhibiting himself at his best to the girl he loves, is a soldier's joy; and the girl is heartless who refuses him the small triumph. Maria was kind, and she shared the triumph with him; she knew that her white-robed figure was entrancing to the young captain, and she stood ready to rain down all of Beauty's influence upon his lifted face. Only a moment was granted them, but in that one moment of meeting eyes, Maria's handkerchief drifted out of her hand and Macpherson caught it on his lifted bayonet, kissed, and put it in his bosom. The incident was accomplished as rapidly and perfectly as events unpremeditated usually are; for they are managed by that Self that sometimes takes

our affairs out of all other control and does perfectly, in an instant, what all our desiring and planning would have failed to do in any space of time.

Neil was much annoyed, and made a movement to stop the fluttering lawn.

"What have you done, Maria?" he asked angrily. "The Van der Donck's and half a dozen other women are watching you."

"I could not help it, Uncle Neil. I do not know how it happened. I never intended to let it fall. Honor bright! I did not."

And perhaps Neil understood, for he said no more on the subject as they walked silently home through the disenchanted city. All the bareness of its brutal usage was now poignantly evident, and the very atmosphere was heavy with an unconquerable melancholy. Some half-tipsy members of the De Lancey militia singing about "King George the Third" only added to the sense of some incongruous disaster. Everyone has felt the intolerable *ennui* which follows a noisy merry-making—the deserted disorder, the spilled wine, the disdained food, the withered flowers, the silenced jest, the giving over of all left to desecration and destruction—all this, and far more was concentrated in that wretched *ennui* of unhappy souls which filled the streets of New York that hot summer afternoon. For an intense dejection lay heavy on every heart. Like people with the same disease, men avoided and yet sought each other. They dared not say, they hardly dared to think, that their love for the King was dying of a disease that had no pity—that their idol had himself torn away the roots of their loyalty. But they

closed their shops early, and retreated to the citadel of their homes. Melancholy, hopelessness, silence, infected the atmosphere and became epidemic, and men and women, sensitive to spiritual maladies, went into their chambers and shut their doors, but could not shut out the unseen contagion. It rained down on them in their sleep, and they dreamed of the calamities they feared.

It was on this afternoon that John Bradley received a new "call" and answered it. Affected deeply by the events of the day, he left his shop in the middle of the hot afternoon and went about some business which took him near the King's College Building, then crowded with American prisoners. As he came under the windows, he heard a thin, quavering voice singing lines very dear and familiar to him:

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take!
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace:
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

Then there was a pause and Bradley called aloud: "Brother, who are you?"

"William Watson," was the answer.

"I thought so. How are you?"

"Dying," then a pause, and a stronger voice added, "and in need of all things."

"Brother Watson, what do you want that I can get now?"

"Cold water to drink, and some fresh fruit," and

then, as if further instructed the voice added, "when you can, a clean shirt to be buried in."

"Tell William he shall have them." His whole manner had changed. There was something he could do, and he went at once for the fruit and water. Fortunately, he knew the provost of this prison and had done him some favors, so he had no hesitation in asking him to see that the small comforts were given to William Watson.

"He was a member of my class meeting, Provost," said Bradley; "a Methodist leader must love his brother in Christ." Here Bradley's voice failed him and the Provost added, "I knew him too—he used to live in good style in Queen Street. I will see that he gets the fruit and water."

"And if you need anything for yourself in the way of saddlery, Provost, I will be glad to serve you."

"I was thinking of a new riding whip."

"I will bring you the best I have. One good turn deserves another."

Then, after a little further conversation he turned homeward, and men who met him on the way wondered what was the matter with John Bradley. For, without cessation, as he walked, he went over and over the same three words, "*Christ forgive me!*" And no one could smile at the monotonous iteration; the man was in too dead earnest; his face was too remorseful, his voice too tragic.

The next morning he was very early in Superintendent Ludlow's office. The great man of the Court of Police had not arrived, but Bradley waited until he came.

"You are an early visitor, Mr. Bradley," he said pleasantly.

"I have a favor to ask, Judge."

"Come in here then. What is it? You are no place or plunder hunter."

"Judge, a month ago you asked me to make you a saddle."

"And you would not do it. I remember."

"I could not—at least I thought I could not; now, if you will let me, I will make you the fittest saddle possible—it shall be my own work, every stitch of it."

"How much money do you want for such a saddle, Bradley?"

"I want no money at all. I want a very small favor from you."

"Nothing for the rebels, I hope. I cannot grant any favor in that direction."

"I want nothing for the rebels; I want one hour every Sunday afternoon in the College prison with my class members."

"Oh, I don't know, Bradley——"

"Yes, you know, Judge. You know, if I give you my promise, I will keep every letter of it."

"What is your promise?"

"I want only to pray with my brothers or to walk awhile with them as they go through the Valley of the Shadow. I promise you that no word of war, or defeat or victory; that no breath of any political opinion shall pass my lips. Nor will I listen to any such."

"Bradley, I don't think I can grant you this request. It would not be right."

"Judge, this is a thing within your power, and you must grant it. We shall stand together at the Judgment, and when the Lord Christ says, 'I was hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not:' don't let me be obliged to plead, 'Lord Christ, I would have fed, and clothed, and visited the sick and in prison, but this man barred my way.' Open the door, Judge, and it shall be well with you for it."

Then, without a word, Ludlow turned to his desk and wrote an order permitting John Bradley to visit his friends for one hour every Sunday afternoon; and as he did so, his face cleared, and when he signed his name he had the glow of a good deed in his heart, and he said:

"Never mind the saddle, Bradley. I don't want to be paid for this thing. You say William Watson is dying—poor Willie! We have fished together many a long summer day"; and he took a few gold pieces from his pocket and added, "they are for the old friend, not for the rebel. You understand. Good morning, sir."

"Good morning, Judge. I won't overstep your grant in any way. I know better."

From this interview he went direct to the prison and sent the gold to the dying man. And as he stood talking to the provost the dead cart came, and five nearly naked bodies were thrown into it, their faces being left uncovered for the provost's inspection. Bradley gazed on them with a hot heart; emaciated to the last point with fever and want,

there was yet on every countenance the peace that to the living, passeth understanding. They had died in the night-watches, in the dark, without human help or sympathy, but doubtless sustained by Him whose name is *Wonderful!*"

"All of them quite common men!" said the provost carelessly—"country rustics—plebeians!"

But when Bradley told his daughter of this visit, he added, passionately, "*Plebeians!* Well, then, Agnes, *Plebeians who found out the secret of a noble death!*"

Sweeter than Joy, tho' Joy might abide;
  Dearer than Love, tho' Love might endure,
Is this thing, for a man to have died
    For the wronged and the poor!

Let none be glad until all are free;
  The song be still and the banner furled,
Till all have seen what the poets see
    And foretell to the world!

CHAPTER IV.

A SONG OF A SINGLE NOTE.

THE next morning, very soon after breakfast, Maria came down stairs ready to visit her friend. She was dressed like a schoolgirl in a little frock of India chintz, her black hair combed backward and plaited in two long, loose braids. One morning she had tied these braids with red ribbon, and been scornfully criticised by her grandmother for "makin' a show of herself." The next morning she had tied them with blue, and been heart-pained by her grandfather's sigh and look of reproach; so this morning they were tied with ribbons as black as her hair, and as she turned herself before the long mirror she was pleased with the change.

"They make my braids look ever so much longer," she said with a pretty toss of her head; "and grandmother can not say I am making a show of myself. One must have ribbons of some color, and black is really distinguished. I suppose that is the reason Uncle Neil wears so much black cloth and velvet."

To these thoughts she ran gaily down stairs. The Elder was reading Rivington's *Royal Gazette;* Madame had a hank of wool over two chairs, and was slowly winding it. She looked at Maria with a little disappointment. Her hat was on her head,

her books in her hand, and she understood where the girl was going; yet she asked: "Is it Agnes Bradley again, Maria?"

"Yes, grandmother. I said no lessons yesterday. We were watching the soldiers pass, and the people, and I was expecting Neil, and there seemed no use in beginning then. I told Agnes I would say extra lessons to-day."

"And I'm doubting, even with the 'extra,' if the lessons amount to much."

"Oh grandmother! I have learned a page of 'Magnall's Questions,' and studied a whole chapter in 'Goldsmith's History' about King John."

"King *who?*" asked Madame, suspiciously. "I never heard tell o' a King John. David, and Robert, and James I ken; but John! No, no, lassie! There's nae King John."

"Maria means John of England," explained the Elder. "He was a vera bad king."

"John of England, or George of England!" answered Madame disdainfully, "kings are much of a muchness. And if he was a bad king, he was a bad man, and ye ought to put your commandments on your granddaughter, Elder, to learn naething about such wicked men. Ye ken as well as I do, that the Almighty forbid the children o' Israel even to *inquire* anent the doings of thae sinners, the Canaanites. And it is bad enough to hae to thole the evil doings o' a living king, without inquiring after the crimes o' a dead one."

"I will give up my history if you wish it, grandmother. I care nothing about King John."

"Maria must learn what other people learn," said

the Elder. "She has to live in the world, and she has sense enough to make her own reflections. Give me a kiss, dearie, and study King John if you like to, he was a bad man, and a bad king, but——"

"Others worse than him!" ejaculated Madame.

"Give me a kiss, darling grandmother, one for myself, and one for Agnes; she always asks for it."

Oh, you flattering lassie!" But the old lady gave the two kisses, and with a sweeping courtesy, Maria closed the door and went humming down the garden walk: *"Who Saw Fair Pamela?"*

She had not gone far before she met Moselle, the only slave Bradley possessed. She was in her Sunday clothing, and she said Missee had given her a whole day's holiday. In that case Agnes would be alone, and Maria hastened her steps onward. The little house was as calm and peaceful looking as usual, the windows all open, the mignonette boxes on their sills in full bloom; the white shades gently stirring in the wind. The door was closed, but on the latch, and Maria turned the handle and went into the parlor. It was empty, but the ruffle Agnes was gathering was on the table, and Maria took off her bonnet and laid it and her books down on the cushioned seat within the window recess. As she lifted her head an astonishing sight met her eyes. In the middle of the yard there was a very handsome young man. He was bareheaded, tall, and straight as a ramrod, and stood with one hand on his hip and his face lifted to the sunshine. Maria's heart beat quick, she lifted her bonnet and books, retreated to the front door, and called "Agnes" in a clear, eager voice.

In a moment or two, Agnes came in at the opposite door. "Maria!" she cried, "I am glad to see you. Is your uncle with you? No? That is well. Come with me to the kitchen. I have given Moselle a holiday. Maria, I have a friend—a very dear friend. I am cooking him some breakfast. Come and help me."

Agnes spoke in a hurried, excited manner very unusual to her, and as she did so, the two girls went into the little outside kitchen. The coffee was ready, the steak broiled, and as Agnes lifted the food she continued, "yes, I have a friend this morning. He is going to eat in the summer-house, and you will help me to wait upon him. Will you not, Maria? Oh, my dear, I am so happy!" And Maria, who remembered only too vividly the bare-headed youth she had seen for a moment, gladly accepted the office. A spirit of keen pleasure was in the dingy little kitchen, and the girls moved gaily to it. "You shall carry the coffee, and I will carry the steak," said Agnes; "the bread and the china are already placed." So laughing and chatting, and delighted with their service the two girls entered the summer-house.

"Harry," said Agnes, "this is my friend, Maria Semple; and Maria, this is Harry Deane." And Harry looked with frank eyes into Maria's eyes, and in a moment they knew each other. What was this strange impression made by a look? Not a word was spoken, but the soul salutation through meeting eyes was a far more overwhelming influence than any spoken word could have evoked. Then came the current forms of courtesy, and the happy tones

of low laughter slipping in between the mingling of voices, or the soft tinkling of glass and china, and everyone knows that as soon as talking begins the divine gates close. It mattered not, Maria knew that something wonderful had happened to her; and never in all her subsequent life could she forget that breakfast under the clematis vines.

Swiftly the hot, still hours of the mid-day passed. The city was torpid in the quivering heat. There was no stir of traffic—no lumbering sound of loaded wagons—no noise of shouting drivers—no footsteps of hurrying men. The streets were almost empty; the very houses seemed asleep. Only the cicadas ran from hedge to hedge calling shrilly; or now and then a solitary trumpet stirred the drowsy air, or, in the vicinity of the prisons, the moaning of the dying men, made the silence terribly vocal.

"Let us go into the house," said Agnes, "it will be cooler there." And they took Maria's hands and went to the shaded parlor. Then Harry drew some cool water from the well, and as they drank it they remembered the men in the various prisons and their pitiful need of water at all times.

"They are the true heroes," said Agnes; "tortured by heat and by cold, by cruel hunger and more cruel thirst, in all extremities of pain and sorrow, they are paying their life blood, drop by drop, like coin, for our freedom."

"And when our freedom is won," answered Harry, "we will give to the dead their due. They, too, have saved us.'

"Do you think, Harry, this French alliance is going to end the war?"

"Those who know best say it will. But these Frenchmen are giving Washington no end of trouble. They are mostly military adventurers. They worry Washington for promotion and for increase of pay; they have only their own interest in view. They scorn our privations and simplicity, and their demands can only be gratified at the expense of native officers whose rights they unjustly wish to invade. Yet I am told that without French money and French help we should have to give up the struggle. I don't believe it. Starving and demoralized as our army is, there are many who will never give up while Washington is alive to lead them."

"If I was a rebel," said Maria, "I should want our freedom won by our own hands only. The French are coming here at the last hour, and they will get all the credit. Do you think it is for love of freedom they help the Americans? If so, why do they not give freedom to France? She has the most tyrannical and despotic of governments; Uncle Neil says so; and yet she pretends to thrill with indignation because England violates the liberties of her colonies. France had better mind her own affairs, or, as grandmother says, she will scald herself with other people's broth."

"God made the French, and He may understand them, I do not," answered Harry. "Fancy the French government allowing our Declaration of Independence to be translated and scattered broadcast all over the country! No wonder that Lafayette smiled grimly when he heard of it; no wonder he said that 'the principles of government we had an-

nounced would soon be heard from in France.' He can see the results, but the king and queen—who catch up every fashion and every enthusiasm with childish levity—do not imagine any one will have the audacity to apply American principles of government to the French monarchy. 'Give me good news from our dear American republicans,' is always Marie Antoinette's greeting to Franklin, and he himself is one of her prime favorites."

"Oh, he is a cunning old man," said Maria. "I have heard grandfather talk about him. I am sure he is disagreeable; yet the French have his picture on their snuff-boxes and rings and brooches. It is such foolishness. And Uncle Neil—who is a very clever lawyer—says some very disparaging things about this famous Declaration. It is at least most inconsistent."

Harry looked his dissent, and Agnes said: "Perhaps you did not understand your uncle, Maria."

"I am not quite a fool, Agnes. In one respect I am cleverer than Mr. Jefferson. Imagine an assembly composed largely, like himself, of slave-owners, saying 'that all men were created equal, and were given by God an unalienable right to liberty.' And do you think if I were king or queen of France I would scatter a paper in every house telling my miserable, starving subjects, that 'whenever a government did not do what it ought to do, it was the right of the people to alter or abolish it.' Indeed, I think King Louis and Queen Marie Antoinette will be sorry some day for teaching their people American ideas of government."

"What do they say in England about the French alliance?" asked Agnes.

"The Parliament declares we have not only rebelled against the mother-country, but also mortgaged ourselves to her enemy; and that if we are to become an accession to France, self-preservation requires England to make that accession of as little value as possible. That does not sound very bad, Agnes, but it means killing men, women and children, burning houses, ravaging land, and making life so wretched that death will be preferable. Now you understand such expeditions as Matthew's and Tryon's. So I say with Miss Semple, it is a pity for many reasons we had to beg foreign help; especially from the three nations who are hereditary foes of England."

"The French did not help you much at Newport," said Maria scornfully.

"They left us in the very oncoming of the battle; as soon as Lord Howe came in sight—sailed away to the West Indies, where they had plans of their own to carry out. The indignation of our army was beyond description; no one but Washington could at this time have kept peace between the French and American soldiers. Their jealousy was flaming, and Washington could not help saying he wished there was not a foreigner in the army but Lafayette. But when Necessity compels, it becomes Destiny, eh, Agnes?"

"Yes. I think England must now be in a very dangerous predicament, Harry."

"She has thirteen colonies in revolt; France, Spain, Holland, uniting against her, and a large majority of her own people conspicuously in our favor. Our old mother-country! I am sorry for her, for

she *is ours,* and we are her sons, even though we have been compelled to rebel against her."

"I think it is England that has rebelled against us," said Agnes. "She has repudiated our chartered rights, and made us aliens to the laws and privileges which are our natural heritage. England is traitor to America, and I don't see why you should be sorry for her."

"Can you take the English blood out of my heart? No. I want our Independence, that we must have, nothing less will now satisfy us; but I don't want to see three other nations, who have no business in our family quarrel, badgering the old mother. If you had a liking for some noble old mastiff, and saw him attacked by three strange dogs, how would you feel?"

"Well, Harry, if the mastiff was hurting me, I might feel obliged to the strange dogs. I do not wonder that France, Spain, and Holland should take this opportunity to fight England; but I do wonder that Englishmen, living in England, should be on our side."

"They have been so from the very first. The King has found it impossible to get soldiers to fight us. They regard us as their countrymen. They refuse to acknowledge the war as an 'English' war; they call it 'The King's War'; and they look upon our victories as triumphs for representative government. I saw a letter from Judge Curwen of Boston, in which he says he visited a large factory in Birmingham where they were making rifles to be used by the English troops in America; and he found that the proprietor, as well as every man thus employed, was

enthusiastically on our side. Fox spoke of an English success on Long Island as 'the terrible news from America'; and many say that the Whig party, of which he is the leader, adopted blue and buff for their colors, because Washington had chosen them for his troop. In both houses of Parliament we have many powerful friends, and the American cause is spoken of throughout England as the cause of Liberty."

Oh, you must be mistaken!" cried Maria. "Grandfather says things very different; and if England is for us, why does the war go on? Whose fault is that."

"It is the fault of King George; the most stupid of men, but with a will as indomitable as the beasts of the desert. Not even King Charles was so determined to ruin himself and the nation. He is cruel as he is immovable. It is *The King's War,* my mistresses, and only the King's friends and sycophants and the clergy defend it."

"And what will those Englishmen who would not lift a finger against us do against our allies?"

"Do? They are preparing with joyful enthusiasm to fight their old enemies. It made my heart throb to hear how they were jumping to arms, at the mere idea of a French and Spanish fleet in the English Channel."

"You are half an Englishman, Mr. Deane," said Maria.

"No," he answered warmly; "I am out and out, from head to foot, an American! I was born here, bred here, and I shall live and die here; nor do I wish to live in any other country. But brave men

and free men feel with a gigantic throb each other's rights and wrongs, even across oceans—thus we are brothers. And the roots of my being are somewhere in England; I can not cut myself loose from them; I do not wish to. The feeling belongs to the unknown side of human reasons—but it governs me."

"I thought," said Maria, "you would talk about nothing but Washington, and you have hardly named him. Is he as great a man as we are told he is? Or does he have faults like the rest of poor mortals?"

"Indeed, Miss Semple, he is so great a man I have forgotten whether he has a fault. He is such a man as men build their love round while he leads them on the way to immortality. Often I have seen the whole army shaken, confused, hopeless; but Washington never shrank, or slipped, or compromised; he looked unswervingly to the end. He is the Moses of America; our people's hope, our young men's idol, our old men's staff and sword. And even physically, who would compare our god-like Washington with this?" and he took from his pocket-case a pen-and-ink sketch of King George, taken at the beginning of the war and showed it to the girls.

They looked at it curiously, and Maria said: "Surely, Mr. Deane, that is not a true likeness; it is what you call a pasquil—a lampoon—to make ridiculous his Majesty."

"It is not intended as a lampoon. But I never see it without thinking of the mighty ghosts of the great Henrys, and the armed Edwards, and then I wonder if they are not watching, with

anger and amazement, the idiotic folly of this German."

"I must really go home now," said Maria. She spoke as if she had all at once become aware of the gravity of the words she was listening to. "I should not have stopped so long. Grandmother is not well."

And she thought Agnes was not sorry to bid her good-bye; "but that is natural," she reflected, "I suppose I should feel the same. She must have a great many things to tell such a lover. I dare be bound I have been much in the way."

Her feelings were captious and impetuous, and she walked rapidly to them, in spite of the heat. Somehow she was not pleased with Agnes, and Harry Deane also had bid her but a formal farewell. And yet not formal; for when he held her hand a moment, he laid it open within his own, and said with a look she could not forget, "my life lies there. I have put it in your hand myself, knowingly, willingly." And she had clasped his hand and answered gravely:

"It is as safe there as it would be in the hand of your mother—or of Agnes."

It was not Harry that she was fretted at, it was Agnes. She felt that in some way Agnes had deceived her. She had not said secrecy would include hours of rebel conversation—"and I wonder at myself for listening to it," said the little woman angrily. "I suppose it was Mr. Deane—men talk women down. I know I should not have let Agnes talk in that way to me—just as if I believed all he said! If Uncle Neil had been there, he would have scattered

every word to the four winds with little trouble. And," she continued, with rising temper, "I don't think Agnes acts fairly to Uncle Neil. He is her devoted lover, and she knows it, she must know it. People don't walk slowly up and down in the moonlight and not know such things. I am, they say, only a child, but I have walked with Captain Macpherson in the moonlight, and I know how amiable it makes me feel. I am disappointed in Agnes!" and she really felt at that moment as if her friend had done her some great wrong. So much easier is it to blame others than to look deep down into our own hearts for the reason of dissatisfaction. For whenever we are disappointed, we are disappointed with ourselves, though we may not admit it."

When she entered the Semple garden she was encompassed with the delicious perfume of carnations. Then she remembered that they were her grandfather's favorite flower, and that before the war his garden had been a wonder and delight with their beauty and fragrance. And in some subtle way, the flowers made an avenue for a spiritual influence, more in accord with the natural uprightness of the girl's nature. She sighed and sauntered through the scented space, and as she did so, began to make her confession. "Perhaps it was my fault—perhaps I was just a little jealous—it is not pleasant to be the outside one; if Captain Macpherson, or even that stupid Lord Medway had been my servant I should not have felt so small; but that was not the fault of Agnes—nevertheless, Agnes ought not to treat Uncle Neil badly."

It was a kind of inconsequent reasoning, but it

restored her to herself, and she entered the house very cheerfully, looking into the parlor first of all, to see whom she could find to talk to. All the rooms down stairs were sweet with the same enthralling odor of carnations; but they were dusky, silent and empty; and she went to her grandmother's room on the second floor. "Are you awake, dear grandmother?" she asked, as she tapped gently on the door.

"Come in, dearie," was the answer, and Madame raised herself from the bed as Maria entered and went to a large chair by the open window. "It is hotter than needs be," she said, "and I have had company."

"Who has been here, grandmother?"

"Mrs. Jermyn brought us an invitation to the Bayards. It is for a three days' visit."

"I am so happy. I have heard about Colonel Bayard's fine house on the Heights; you will surely go, grandmother?"

"I can not go, Maria; but Mrs. Jermyn offered to take you in her party; and to that I am agreeable. Madame Jacobus will go with you, and I am vera fond o' Madame Jacobus. She is not an ordinary woman; she has had romantics in her life, and the vera look o' her sets you thinking o' all sorts o' impossibilities. Tell her Madame Semple keeps good mind o' her, and would be glad to see her again;" then she added sharply, "Mrs. Gordon was with her. I was quite taken aback. I was all in a tremble at first."

"She is so anxious to be friends with you; can't you forgive her, grandmother? It is a long time since."

"Maria Semple, no one is mair willing than I am, to let byganes be byganes. But mind this, there are folks simply unlucky to you, and not intending it; and Adelaide Gordon and Janet Semple are best apart. She is one o' them women who bring happenings and events, and I notice they are not pleasant or favorable. You will hae heard say, Maria, *wha* it is, that sends a woman, where he canna go himsel'. Cousin Gordon means no harm—but."

"Indeed, she really likes you. She talks to me of the days she lived with you, and of all your kindness to her. It was Katherine Van Heemskirk that behaved badly. I don't think I like that person—and I want you to forgive Mrs. Gordon."

"I have forgiven Mrs. Gordon, Maria. Do you think I would put the Lord's prayer behind my back for Adelaide Gordon? And I couldna dare to say it and not forgive her; but to love your friend, and look to yoursel' isna out o' the way o' wisdom."

"When am I to go, grandmother?"

"Mrs. Jermyn will call for you at ten o'clock tomorrow morning. How about thae lessons, and the 'extras' you were speaking o'?"

"It is such warm weather. I think I ought to have my holiday now; and what about my frocks, grandmother? Shall I not have to pack my small trunk?"

This subject was, of course, paramount, and Madame went to Maria's room with her, and the proper garments were selected and packed. Very soon the whole house was infected with the hurry and excitement of the little lady, and the Elder tried to join in the discussion and employment; it being one of his

pet ideas that he had a pretty taste about women's clothing. But his first suggestion that the simple frock of India chintz Maria was wearing was a most becoming morning gown, met with such a decided rebuff he had no courage left for further advice. For Maria looking scornfully down at its short simplicity asked, "Why do you not advise a white ruffled pinafore also, grandfather? Then I would be fit for an infant school. I am a young lady now," she continued, as she spread out its three breadths to their utmost capacity, showing in the act the prettiest little feet, shod in bronze leather with red rosettes on the instep. And when a man finds his opinions out of date, what can he do but retire with them into silence?

The quiet that fell upon the house after Maria's departure was a grateful respite. The old people sat down with a sigh of relief, and while they praised their granddaughter's sweet nature, and talked proudly of all her excellences, they were not sorry to be at rest for a day or two. Neither was the Elder sorry to casually notice the absence of Maria to certain royalist upstarts who had won wealth through their chicaneries, but who had not been able to win the social notice they craved.

"Elder Semple may be pinched, now and then, for a few sovereigns," he thought, "but he and his can sit down with the highest of the King's servants and be counted one o' them. And it will be lang ere the Paynes and the Bradleys and many others I could name, will get that far!"

Such reflections gave to the old gentleman's steps something of the carriage of his more prosperous

days; he looked outward and upward in his old manner, and thus saw Mr. Cohen, the Jewish trader, standing in his shop door. He asked pleasantly after his health, and by so doing brought a few good words on himself, which somehow went warmly to his heart. In this amiable temper he passed the famous saddlery shop. John Bradley was just dismissing a customer. He was wearing his apron of blue and white ticking, and had a paper cap upon his head, and he looked precisely what he was—a capable, self-respecting workman. Semple had always permitted a polite salutation to cover all claims on his courtesy that Bradley might have; but this morning he said with a friendly air, "How's all with you, Mr. Bradley? Will you tell your charming daughter that her friend, Miss Semple, has gone wi' a party o' our military friends to the Bayards' for a three days' visit?"

"Agnes will miss her friend, Elder."

"Yes, yes! They went off this morning early, up the river wi' music and singing. Young things, most o' them, Mr. Bradley, and we must make allowances."

"If we must, we must, Elder. And God knows, if it isn't the lute and the viol, and the tinkling feet of the foolish maidens, it is the trumpet, and the sword, and the hell of the battlefield. Evil times we are fallen on, sir."

"But they are to bring us good times. We must not doubt that. My respects, sir, to Miss Bradley, who has a voice to lift a soul on the wings of melody, heavenward. Good day, sir."

Semple went forward a little dashed, he hardly

knew why; and Bradley was chagrined. He had tried to say something that should not only represent himself, but also acknowledge the kindness he was sensible of; but he had only blundered into commonplaces, and quite against his will, shown much of his roughest side. Why did he include the Elder's granddaughter among the tinkling feet of foolish maidens? She was the friend of his own child also. He felt that he had had an opportunity and mismanaged it, and a sense of his inabilities in all social matters mortified and fretted him all the day afterward.

Maria was expected home in three days, but she did not come. Her party went directly from the Bayard house to Hempstead, where Colonel Birch was entertaining a large company from the city; so it was fully a week before the young lady returned to New York. In the meantime Destiny was not asleep, and affairs in which Maria was interested did not lie still waiting for her reappearance.

Maria had left a message for Agnes with her uncle, and he resolved to take it personally that evening. But as he was drinking his tea the Elder said, "I saw Mr. Bradley this morning, and I sent word by him to his daughter anent Maria's absence." Neil did not make any answer, but his mother noticed the sweep of color up and down his dark face, and she was on the point of saying, "you hae taken the job out o' hands that would hae done it better, gudeman." But the wisdom and kindness of silence was granted her; yet the Elder felt his remark to be unpropitious, and sighed. There were so many subjects these days that he made mistakes

about; and he had a moment's recollection of his old authoritative speech, and a wonder as to what had happened him. Was it that he had fallen out of the ranks of the workers of the world? Or, was it because he was growing old? He was silent, and so pathetic in his silence, that Neil observed it and blamed himself.

"Father," he said, "pardon me! I was thinking. I have been with Major Crosby all day about the Barrack Department finances, and that is not work to be talked about. It is well you told Mr. Bradley of Maria's absence."

"I wonder you did not go with Maria; you had an invitation."

"Yes, I had an invitation, but I had engagements of more importance with Brigadier Skinner and Treasurer McEvers. McEvers is to pay me with wood from a rebel tract granted him. So when the cold weather comes we shall not require to count the sticks; we can at least keep warm."

He rose with these words and went to his room. He told himself that he would there consider a visit to Miss Bradley, and yet he knew that he intended to make it no matter what considerations came up for his deliberation. Not for a moment did he deceive himself; he was well aware that for the first time in his life he was really in love. He admitted frankly that his early passion for the pretty Katherine Van Heemskirk had been a selfish affair; and that his duel with Captain Hyde was fought, not so much for love of Katherine, as for hatred and jealousy of his rival. He had never loved Katherine as he loved Agnes, for it was the soul of Agnes that

attracted him and drew him to her by a gravitation, like that which one star exerts upon another. His first love he had watched grow from childhood to maidenhood; he could count on his fingers the number of times he had seen Agnes Bradley; and yet from this slender experience there had sprung an invincible longing to say to her, "O, Soul of my Soul, I love you! I need you!"

Yet to make Agnes his wife at this time was to make sacrifices that he durst not contemplate. They included the forfeiture of his social position, and this loss was certain to entail the same result on his political standing and emoluments. His father was connected with his financial affairs, and to ruin himself meant also ruin to the parents he loved so truly. Then the sudden fear that assails honest lovers made his heart tremble; Agnes might have scruples and reluctances; she might not be able to love him; she might love some other man, Maria had named such a probability; with a motion of his hand he swept all contingencies aside; no difficulties should abate his ardor; he loved Agnes Bradley and he was determined to win her.

With this decision he rose, stood before his mirror, and looked at himself. Too proud a man to be infected with so small a vice as vanity, he regarded his personality without unreasonable favor. "I am still handsome," he said. "If I have not youth, I have in its place the perfection of my own being; I am now in the prime of life, and have not began to fall away from it. Many young and beautiful women have shown me favor I never sought. Now, I will seek favor; I will woo it, beg it, pray

for it I will do anything within honor and honesty to win this woman of my soul, this adorable Agnes!"

He found her in the garden of her home; that is, she was sitting on the topmost step of the short flight leading to the door. Her silent, penetrative loveliness encompassed her like an atmosphere in which all the shafts of the shelterless, worrying day fell harmless. She smiled more than spoke her welcome, and her eyes unbarred her soul so that they seemed to understand each other at a glance; for Neil's love was set far above all passionate tones of welcome or personal adulation. Sitting quiet by her side he noticed a man walking constantly before the house, and he pointed out the circumstance to Agnes.

"He will walk there until my father comes home," she answered. "It is Elias Hurd the chapel keeper. Father pays him to come here every day at sunset and watch till he returns."

"Your words take a great fear from me," said Neil; and then, though his heart was brim full he could say no more. Silence again enfolded them, and the song in each heart remained unsung. Yet the overwhelming influence of feelings which had not found words was upon them, and this speechless interlude had been to both the clearest of revealers.

After a week's pleasure-seeking Maria returned home. It was in the middle of a hot afternoon, and life was at its most languid pitch. The Elder was asleep in his chair, Madame asleep on the sofa, and the negroes dozing in the kitchen. Her entry aroused the house, her personality instantly filled it. She was flushed and tired, but alive with the egotis-

tical spirit of youth. "Were you not expecting me?" she asked with an air of injury, as she entered the drowsy, tidy house. "And I do want a cup of tea so much, grandmother."

"You were coming Monday, and then you were coming Wednesday; we did not know whether you would come to-day or not; but you are very welcome, dear, and you shall have tea in ten minutes."

She went upstairs while it was preparing, took off her bonnet and her silk coat, dashed cool water over her flushed face and shoulders and arms, wet her hair and brushed it backward, and then put on a loose gown of thin muslin. "Now I can drink my tea in comfort," she said, "and just talk at my leisure. And dear me! What a week of tumult it has been!"

"Have you enjoyed your visits?" asked the Elder when she reappeared.

"So, so, grandfather," she answered; and as she spoke, she lifted the small tea-table close to his side, and whispered on his cheek, "you will have a cup of tea with me, dear grandfather, I shall not enjoy mine unless you do." He said "pooh! pooh! child," but he was delighted, and with beaming smiles watched her small hands busy among the china, and the bread and meat.

"I am downright hungry," she said. "We had breakfast before leaving, but that seems hours and hours ago, and, O grandmother! there is no tea and bread like yours in all the world."

Then she began her long gossip concerning people and events: the water parties on the river, the pic-

nics in the woods, the dancing and gambling and games in the house. "And I must tell you," she said, "that really and truly, I was the most admired of all the beauties there. The ladies all envied my frocks, and asked where I got them, and begged for the patterns; and I wished I had taken more with me. It is so exhilerating to have a new one for every evening. Lord Medway said every fresh one became me better than the last."

"Lord Medway!" said the Elder. "Is he that long, lazy man that trails after General Clinton like his shadow?"

"Well, they love each other. It seems funny for men to love one another; but General Clinton and Lord Ernest Medway are like David and Jonathan."

"Maria Semple!" cried Madame, "I think you might even the like o' Clinton and the English Lord, to some one o' less respectability than Bible characters."

"O grandmother! General Clinton is just as blood-thirsty as General David ever was. He hates his enemies quite as perfectly, and wishes them all the same sorts and kinds of calamities. I don't know whether Jonathan was good-natured, but Lord Medway is. He danced with me as often as I would let him, and he danced with nobody else! think of that, grandmother! the women were all madly jealous of me. I did not care for that much."

"Janet, dear," said the Elder to his wife, "if you had ever seen this Lord Medway trailing up William Street or Maiden Lane, you wouldna believe the lassie. He is just the maist inert piece o' humanity

you could imagine. *Dancing! Tuts! Tuts! lassie!"*

"He can dance, grandfather. Mrs. Gordon said the way he led me through a minuet was adorable; and Major Andre told me that in a skirmish or a cavalry charge, no one could match him. He was the hardest rider and fiercest fighter in the army."

"Weel, weel!" said Madame, "a man that isna roused by anything short o' a battle or a cavalry charge, might be easy to live with—if you have any notion for English lords."

"Indeed, I have not any notion for Lord Medway. He is the most provoking of men. He takes no interest in games, he won't stake money on cards, he listened to the music with his eyes shut; and when Miss Robertson and Major Andre acted a little piece the Major had written, he pretended to be asleep. He was not asleep, for I caught him awake, and he smiled at me, as much as to say that I knew all about his deception, and sanctioned it. I told him so afterward, and he laughed so heartily that every one looked amazed, and what do you think he said? 'It is a fact, ladies; I really laughed, but it is Miss Semple's fault.' I don't think, grandmother, I would have been invited to Hempstead if he had not let it be known that he was not going unless Miss Semple went."

"Is he in love with you?"

"He thinks he is."

"Are you in love with him?"

Maria smiled, and with her teacup half-way to her mouth hummed a line from an old Scotch song:

"I'm glad that my heart's my ain."

Such conversation, touching many people and many topics, was naturally prolonged, and when Neil came home it was carried on with renewed interest and vigor. And Maria was not deceived when Neil with some transparent excuse of 'going to see a friend' went out at twilight.

"He is going to see Agnes," she thought; "my coming home is too good an excuse to lose, but why did he not tell me? Lovers are so sly, and yet all their cunning is useless. People always see through their little moves. In the morning I shall go to Agnes, and I hope she will not be too advising, because I am old enough to have my own ideas: besides, I have some experiences."

All the way to her friend's house in the morning, she was making resolutions which vanished as soon as they were put to the test. It was only too easy to fall into her old confidential way, to tell all she had seen and heard and felt; to be petted and admired and advised. Also, she could relate many little episodes to Agnes that she had not felt disposed to tell her grandparents, or even Neil—compliments and protestations, and sundry "spats" of envy and jealousy with the ladies of the party. But the conversation settled mainly, however often it diverged, upon Lord Medway. Agnes had often heard her father speak of him. He knew John Wesley, and had asked him to preach at Market-Medway to his tenants and servants; and on the anniversary of the Wesley Chapel in John Street he had given Mr. Bradley twenty pounds toward the Chapel fund. "He is a far finer man than he affects to be," she added, "and father says he wears that drawling,

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trailing habit like a cloak, to hide his real nature. Do you think he has fallen in love with you, Maria?"

"Would it be a very unlikely thing to happen, Agnes? He danced only with me, and when Major Andre arranged the Musical Masque, he consented to sing only on the condition that I sang with him."

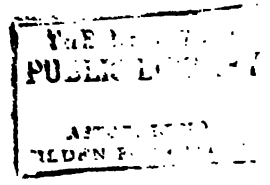
"And what else, Maria?"

"One evening Quentin Macpherson danced the Scotch sword dance—a very clever barbaric thing—but I did not like it; the man looks better at the head of his company. However, he sang a little song called 'The Soldier's Kiss' that was pretty enough. The melody went in this way"—and Maria hummed a strain that sounded like the gallop of horses and shaking of bridles—"I only remember the chorus," she said.

"A kiss, Sweet, a kiss, Sweet,
For the drums are beat along the street,
And we part, and know not when we meet,
With another kiss like this, Sweet.

"And Lord Medway whispered to me that Shakespeare had said it all far better in one line, *'Touch her soft mouth and march.'* In Major Andre's masque we had a charming little verse; I brought you a copy of it, see, here it is. The first two lines have a sweet crescendo melody; at the third line there was a fanfare of trumpets in the distance and the gentlemen rattled their swords. The fourth line we sang alone, and at the close Lord Medway bowed to me, and the whole room took up the refrain." Then the girls leaned over the paper, and Agnes read the words aloud slowly, evidently committing them to her memory as she read:

MARIA LAY DRESSED UPON HER BED.



"A song of a single note!
But it soars and swells above
The trumpet's call, and the clash of arms,
For the name of the song is Love."

"Now sing me the melody, Maria," said Agnes; and Maria sang, and Agnes listened, and then they sang it together until it was perfect. "Just once more," said Maria, and as they reached the close of the verse, a strong, musical voice joined in the refrain, and then Harry came into the room singing it.

"Harry! Harry!" cried Agnes, joyfully.

"And the name of the song is Love!" he answered, taking Agnes in his arms and kissing the word on her lips. Then he turned with a glowing face to Maria, and she bent her head a little proudly, and remained silent. But soon Agnes went away to order coffee for her visitor, and then Harry sat down by Maria, and asked to see the song, and their hands met above the passionate words, and the dumb letters became vocal. They sang them over and over, their clear, fresh voices growing softer and softer, till, almost in a whisper of delight, they uttered the last word *"Love!"* Then he looked at her as only a lover can look, and she looked at him like one who suddenly awakens. Her past was a sleep, a dream; that moment her life began. And she had all the tremors that mark the beginnings of life; a great quiet fell upon her, and she wanted to go into solitude and examine this wonderful experience. For Harry had stirred one of those unknown soul depths that only Love ventures down to.

When Agnes returned she said she must go home, her grandmother was not well; and then she blundered into such a number of foolish excuses as made

Agnes look curiously, perhaps anxiously, at her. And for several days she continued these excuses; she sent Neil with messages and letters, but she did not go to her friend. There was something wrong between them, and Maria finally threw the blame upon Agnes.

"Any one may see that she is deceiving either Harry or uncle Neil—and I hate a deceiver. It is not fair—I am sure if Harry knew about uncle—if he was not engaged to Agnes—Oh, no! I must not think of him. Poor uncle Neil! If Agnes treats him badly, I shall never forgive her, never!" Thus, and so on, ran her reflections day after day, and yet she had not the courage to go and talk the matter out with Agnes. But she noticed an unusual exaltation in her uncle's manner; he dressed with more than his usual sombre richness; he seemed to tread upon air, and though more silent than ever, a smile of great sweetness was constantly on his lips. And one afternoon as Maria sat at her tambour frame, Madame entered the parlor hastily, looking almost frightened.

"Do you hear him? Your uncle, I mean. Do you hear him, Maria?" she cried. "He is singing. He must be *fey*. I haven't heard him sing since he was a lad going to Paul Gerome's singing class. It's uncanny! It frightens me! And what is he singing, Maria?"

And Maria lifting a calm face answered—*"The name of the song is Love."*

CHAPTER V.

LOVE'S SWEET DREAM.

IT is not truth, but falsehood which requires explanation, and Maria was sensible of this fact as she sat at her tambour frame thinking of Agnes and of Harry and of her uncle Neil. There was something not straightforward in the life of Agnes, and she resolved every day to make inquiry into it, and every day she made, instead, some deferring excuse. But one morning, while eating breakfast, they were all sensitive to unusual movements in the city, and the air was tense with human emotion. The Elder and Neil became restless and anticipative, and Maria could not escape the feverish mental contagion. When the men had left the house she hurried through her few duties, and then went to her friend. Agnes was standing at the garden gate, watching and listening. "There is news of some kind, Maria," she said; "I am anxious to know what it is."

"Grandmother says we need not run after news, it will find us out, and I dare say it is only more Connecticut ravaging."

Then Agnes turned into the house with Maria, for she perceived something unusual in her voice and manner—dissatisfaction, and perhaps a tone of in-

jury. There was no pretence of study about her, she had not even brought her books, and Agnes became silent, and lifted her sewing. At length Maria spoke:

"What is the matter with you, Agnes?" she asked, and then added: "you are not like yourself this morning."

"Whatever the matter is, Maria, I caught it from you."

"You are cross."

"I was only curious and anxious when you came. You brought dissatisfaction and annoyance with you. I think you had better tell me at once what has displeased you."

"Oh, you must know what displeases me, Agnes. Do you think I can bear to see you playing with two lovers at once? I am very fond of my uncle Neil, and he adores you. And when Harry is away, uncle Neil is everything; but as soon as Harry comes, then Harry is everything. It is not fair to uncle, and I do not approve of such ways. If I were to act in that kind of fashion between Lord Medway and Quentin Macpherson, who would be so shocked as Agnes Bradley? I am so disappointed in you, Agnes. I have not been able to come and see you for days; this morning I felt that I must speak to you about things."

"Maria, I once asked you to defer judgment on whatever you saw or heard or suspected, and to take my word for it being all right. It seems that I asked too much."

"But how can it be all right, if you allow two men to make love to you?—and you seem to like it from both of them."

"I do like it—from both of them. The two loves are different."

"Agnes! Agnes! I am shocked at you!" and Maria hid her face on the sofa cushion and began to cry.

Then Agnes knelt at her side, and lifted her face and kissed it, and whispered four words in her ear; and there was a look of wonder, and Maria asked softly, "Why did you not tell me before?"

"I thought every time you saw him you would surely guess the truth."

"I did not."

"You must have seen also that Harry is deeply in love with you. Now, how could he be in love with me also?"

"Harry in love with me! O Agnes!"

"You know it. Love cannot be hid. Only lovers look at a woman as I have seen Harry look at you."

"I do think Harry likes me, and I felt as if—I don't know what I felt, Agnes. I am very unhappy."

"Let me tell you what you felt. You said to yourself: if Harry was not bound to Agnes he would be my lover; and Agnes does not care for him, she does not treat him well, and yet she treats him too well to be doing right to uncle Neil. You would include your uncle, because you would feel it selfish to be wounded and disappointed only on your own account."

"You ought not to speak in that way, Agnes. Suppose I had such feelings, it is not nice of you to put them into words so plain and rude."

"I do not blame you, Maria. Your attitude is

natural, and specially womanly. It is I who have been wrong. I must now excuse myself to you; once you said you could believe in me without explanations."

"Forgive me, Agnes. I do not want explanations now."

"For I have told you that Harry is my brother, not my lover. That is the main fact, and accounts for all that specially troubles you. Now you must know the whole truth. Harry was sent to England out of the way of the war, for my father lives and moves in his being and welfare. But Harry wanted to be in the thick of the war; he wanted the post of most danger for his country's sake. He said he was ashamed to be in England; that every American who could be in active service ought to be there, because it might be, God intended to use just him. I gave in to all he proposed; I had no heart to resist him. I only stipulated that come what would, our father should not know he was in the country."

"Why did you not tell me at first that he was your brother?"

"Harry is handsome, and I was afraid you might be attracted by him; and the secrecy and romance of the situation and the danger he was constantly facing—these are things that capture a woman's imagination. And marriage is such an important affair, I could not think it right to run the risk of engaging you to Harry unknown to your father or friends. I told Harry that you believed him to be my lover, and I was sure that this belief would save you from thinking of him in any light but that of a friend or brother."

"It ought to have done, dear Agnes; it did do—but Harry."

"I know, at Harry's second visit, if not at his first, he was your lover; and I knew that this explanation must come. Now, I can only beg you to keep the knowledge of Harry Bradley's presence in America absolutely to yourself. I assure you, if father knew he was here and in constant danger, he would be distracted."

"But does he not suspect? He must wonder that Harry does not write to him."

"Harry does write. He sends letters to a friend in London, who re-mails them to father. About three times a year father gets a London letter, and that satisfies him. And he so little suspects Harry's presence in America that the boy has passed his father on the street without the slightest recognition on father's part; for he has more disguises than you could believe possible. I have seen him as a poor country doctor, buying medicines for his settlement; as an old schoolmaster, after a few books and slates at Rivington's; and a week ago, I met him one day shouting to the horses which were pulling a load of wood up Golden Hill. And he has no more transitions than a score of other young men who serve their country in this secret and dangerous manner. I can assure you General Washington's agents go in and out of New York constantly, and it is beyond the power of England to prevent them."

"Suppose in some evil hour he should be suspected! Oh, Agnes!"

"There are houses in every street in the city where a window or a door is always left open. Harry told

me he knew of sixteen, and that he could pass from one to the other in safety."

"Suppose he should be noticed on the river, at your landing or any other."

"He can swim like a fish and dive like a seal and run like a deer. The river banks that look like a tangle to you and me, are clear as a highway to Harry. And you know it is the East river that is watched; no one thinks much about the water on this side; especially so near the fort. I do not think Harry is in any great danger; and he will be mainly on the river now for some months."

"I wish I had not said a word, Agnes. I am so sorry! So sorry!"

"We are always sorry when we doubt. I felt that you were mistrusting me, and I promised Harry, on his last visit, to tell you the truth before he came again. I have been waiting for you all week. I should have told you to-day, even if you had not said a word."

"I shall never forgive myself."

"I was wrong also, Maria. I ought, at the first, to have trusted you fully."

"Or not trusted me at all, Agnes."

"You are right, Maria."

A great chagrin made Maria miserable. A little faith, a little patience, and the information she had demanded in spirit unlovely and unloving, would have come to her by Harry's desire, and with the affectionate confidence of Agnes. But neither of the girls were fully satisfied or happy, and the topic was dropped. Both felt that the matter would have to rest, in order to clear itself, and Agnes was not

unconscious of those mute powers within, which, if left to themselves, clear noiselessly away the débris of our disputes and disappointments. She proposed a walk in the afternoon; she said she had shopping to do, and if there was any news, they would likely hear it from some one."

There was evidently news, and Agnes at once judged it unfavorable for the royalists. The military were moving with sullen port; the houses were generally closed, and the people on the streets not inclined to linger or to talk. "We had better ask my father," she said, and they turned aside to Bradley's store to make the inquiry. The saddler was standing at the door talking to Lord Medway; and his eyes flashed an instant's triumphant signal as they caught his daughter's glance of inquiry. But he kept his stolid air, and when he found Lord Medway and Maria so familiarly pleased to meet each other, he introduced Agnes and gave a ready acquiescence to Lord Medway's proposal to walk with the ladies home.

Then, Maria, suddenly brilliant with a sense of her power, asked, "What is the matter with the city this afternoon? Every one seems so depressed and ill-humored."

"We have lost Stony Point," answered Medway. "There was a midnight attack by twelve hundred picked men. It was an incomparable deed of daring. I would like to have been present. I said to General Clinton when I heard the story, 'Such men are born to rule, and coming from the stock they do, you will never subdue them!' "

"Who led the attack?" asked Agnes.

"Anthony Wayne, a brave daring man, they tell me. The Frenchman, De Fleury, was first in, and he hauled down our flags. *Dash it!* If it had been an American, I would not have cared so much. Now, perhaps, Generals Clinton and Tryon will understand the kind of men they have to fight. When Americans fight Englishmen, it is Greek meeting Greek. Clinton tells me the rebels have taken four thousand pounds' worth of ordnance and stores and nearly seven hundred prisoners. Oh, you know a deed like this makes even an enemy proud of the men who could do it!"

"Was it a very difficult deed?" asked Maria.

"I am told that Stony Point is a rock two hundred feet high, surrounded by the Hudson River on three sides, and almost isolated from the land on the fourth side by a marsh, which at high tide is two feet under water. They reached the fort about midnight, and while one column drew the defenders to the front by a rapid continuous fire, two other columns, armed only with the bayonet, broke into the fort from opposite points. In five minutes the rebels were rushing through every embrasure, and a thousand tongues crying 'Victory'! There is no use belittling such an affair. It was as brave a thing as ever men did, and I wish I had seen the doing of it."

In such conversation they passed up Maiden Lane, and by the ruins of Trinity Church to the river side; all of them influenced by the tense feeling which found no vocal outlet for its passion. Men and women would appear for a moment at a window, and then disappear. They were American patriots on the look-out to spread the good news. A flash

from the lifted eyes of Agnes was sufficient. Again they would meet two or three royalists talking in a dejected, disparaging way of the victory; or else blustering in anger over the supineness or inefficiency of their generals.

"I hope General Clinton will now find his soldiers some tougher work than hay-making," sneered an irate old man who stopped Lord Medway. "If he goes out hay-making, he ought to leave fighting men in the forts. Why the commander at Stony Point —Colonel Johnson—I know him, had a wine party, and the officers from Verplanck's Point were drinking with him, when Wayne walked into their midst and made them all prisoners. I am told the sentinels had been secured, the abatis removed, and the rebels in the works before our fine soldiers knew an enemy was near. And it was that tanner from Pennsylvania—that Dandy Wayne, that stole the march on them! It makes me ashamed of our English troops, my lord!

"Well, Mr. Smith, General Clinton will be in New York in a few days. There will be many to call him to account, I have no doubt."

In this electric atmosphere heart spoke to heart very readily, for in the midst of great realities conventionalities are of so little consequence, and genuine feeling, of any kind, forgets, or puts aside, flatteries or compliments. So when they reached the Bradley house, Agnes asked Lord Medway if he would enter and rest awhile? And he said he would, and so sat talking about the war until it was tea-time for the simple maidens, who ate their dinner at twelve o'clock. Then he saw Agnes bring in the

tray, and take out the china, and lay the round table with a spotless nicety; and it delighted him to watch the homely scene. Maria was knitting, and he turned her ball of pink yarn in his hands and watched her face glow and smile and pout and change with every fresh sentiment. Or, if he lifted his eyes from this picture, he could look at Agnes, who had pinned a clean napkin across her breast, and was cutting bread and butter in the wafer slices he approved. He wondered if she would ask him to take tea with them; if she did not he was resolved to ask himself. Then he noticed she had placed three cups on the tray, and he was sure of her hospitality.

It made him very happy, and he never once fell into the affectation of talk and manner appropriate to a fashionable tea-table. He seemed to enjoy both the rebel sentiments of Agnes, and the royalist temper of Maria; and he treated both girls with such hearty deference and respect as he did not always show to much more famous dames. And it was while sitting at this tea-table he gave his heart without reserve to Maria Semple. If he had any doubts or withdrawals, he abandoned them in that happy hour, and said frankly to himself:

"I will make her my wife. That is my desire and my resolve; and I will not turn aside from it for anything, nor for any man living; Maria Semple is the woman I love, no one else shall have her."

In following out this resolve he understood the value of Agnes; and he did all he could to gain her good-will. She was well disposed to give it; her father's approval bespoke hers. A feeling of good

comradeship and confidence grew rapidly as they ate, and drank their tea, and talked freely and without many reservations, for the sake of their political feelings. So much so, that when Lord Medway rose to go, there came to Agnes a sudden fear and chill. She looked at him apprehensively, and while he held her hand, she said:

"Lord Medway, Maria and I have been very sincere with you, but I am sure our sincerity cannot wrong us, in your keeping."

This was not very explicit, but he understood her meaning. He laid his hand upon the table at which they had eaten, and said: "It is an altar to faith and friendship. When I am capable of repeating anything said at the table where I sit as guest, I shall be lost to truth and honor, and be too vile to remember." He spoke with force, and with a certain eloquence, very different from his usual familiar manner, and both Agnes and Maria showed him in their shining eyes and confiding air how surely they believed in him.

After this event there was continual excitement in the city, and General Clinton returned to it at once. He called in the little army he had cutting grass for winter fodder, and with twenty thousand troops shut himself up in New York.

"For once the man has been employing himself well and wiselike," said Madame Semple. "He has cut all the grass, and cured all the grass round about Rye, and White Plains, and New Rochelle, and East Chester, and a few other places; and he has left it all ahint him. What a wiselike wonderfu' man is General Sir Henry Clinton!"

"And the rebels have carried off the last wisp o' hay he made," said the Elder angrily. "They were on the vera heels o' our soldiers. It's beyond believing! It's just the maist mortifying thing that ever happened us."

Madame looked pityingly at her husband, raised her shoulders to emphasize the look, and then in a thin voice, quavering a little with her weakness and emotion, began to sing to herself from that old translation of the Psalms so dear to every Scottish heart:

"Kings of great armies foiled were
And forced to flee away;
And women who remained at home
Did distribute the prey.
God's chariots twenty thousand are,
Thousands of angels strong."

"Janet! Janet! Will you sing some kind o' calming verse? The Lord is naething but a *man of war* in your thoughts. Do you believe He goes through the earth wi' a bare, lifted sword in His hand?"

"Whiles He does, Alexander. And the light from that lifted sword lightens the earth. I hae tasted o' the goodness of the Lord; I know of old His tender mercy, and His loving kindness, but in these awfu' days, I am right glad to think o' Him as *The Lord of Hosts!* He is sure to be on the right side, and He can make of one man a thousand, and of a handful, a great multitude."

"It's a weary warld."

"But just yet there's nae better one, my dear auld man! So we may as well tak' cheerfully what good comes to-day, there will be mair to-morrow, or I'm far wrang."

If Janet's "to-morrow" be taken as she meant it to be taken, her set time was long enough for other startling events. Tryon's expedition was ordered back to New York, and Quentin Macpherson brought the news of his own return. He did not meet with as warm a welcome as he hoped for. Madame was contemptuous and indignant over the ravaging character of the expedition. The Elder said they had "alienated royalists without intimidating rebels"; and Maria looked critically at the young soldier, and thought him less handsome than she had supposed: the expedition, so cowardly and cruel, had been demoralizing and had left its mark on the young man. He was disappointed, jealous, offended; he had an overweening opinion of the nobility of his family and not a very modest one as to his own deserts. He was also tenacious, and the thing he desired grew in value as it receded from his grasp; so, although angry at Maria, he had no idea of relinquishing his suit for her hand.

She kept as much as possible out of his company, and this was not difficult. The troops were constantly on the alert, for one piece of bad news, for the royalists, followed another. A month after the capture of Stony Point, the rebels took Paulus Hook in a midnight attack. This fort had been most tenaciously held by the English from the earliest days of the war, it being the only safe landing-place in Jersey for their foraging parties. It was within sight of New York, and almost within reach of its guns. The shame and anger of the royalist burghers was unspeakable; they would have openly insulted the military, if they had dared to do so.

About two weeks later came the news of Sullivan's sweeping victory over the Six Nations of Indians under Sir John Johnson and the Indian Chief, Brandt. The Americans turned their country into a desert, and drove the whole people in headlong flight as far as Niagara. This Autumn also was rendered remarkable by the astonishing success of the American privateers; never had they been at once so troublesome and so fortunate. So that there was plenty for every one to talk about, if there had been neither lovers nor love-making in the land. But it seemed as if Love regarded the movement of great armies and the diplomacies of great nations, as the proper background and vehicles for his expression. While Medway was talking, or fishing, or hunting with Clinton, he was thinking of Maria. While Macpherson was inspecting his company, he was thinking of Maria. While Harry was traversing the woods and the waters, he was thinking of Maria. And while Neil Semple was drawing out titles, and making arguments in Court, he was always conscious of the fact that his happiness was bound up in the love of Agnes Bradley. On every side also, other lovers were wooing and wedding. The sound of trumpets did not sadden the music of the marriage feast, nor did the bridal dance tarry a moment for the tramp of marching soldiers. All the chances and changes of war were but ministers of Love, and did his pleasure.

In the meantime John Bradley was stitching his saddles, and praying and working for Washington, the idol of his hopes, quite unconscious of how completely his home had been confiscated to the service

of love and lovers. No house in all the restless city seemed less likely to be the rendezvous of meeting hearts; and yet quite naturally, and by the force of the simplest circumstances, it had assumed this character. It began with Maria. Her beauty and charm had given her three lovers, who were, all of them, men with sufficient character to find, or to make a way to her presence. But every movement, whether of the body or the soul, takes, by a certain law, the direction in which there is the least resistance; and the road of least resistance to Maria, was by way of Agnes Bradley.

At the Semple house, Madame was a barrier Medway could not pass. She told Maria plainly, "no English lord should cross her doorstep." She could not believe in his good heart, or his good sense, and she asked scornfully, "how a close friend of General Clinton's could be fit company for an American girl? He has nae charm for touching pitch without being defiled," she said, "and I'll not hae him sitting on my chairs, and putting his feet on my hearth, and fleching and flattering you in my house while my name is Janet Semple. And you may tell him I said so."

And in order to prevent Madame giving her own message, Maria was compelled to confess to Lord Medway, her grandmother's antagonism. He was politely sorry for her dislike to Englishmen—for he preferred to accept it as a national, rather than a personal feeling; but it did not interfere with his intentions. There was Miss Bradley. She had a kind feeling toward him, and Maria spent a large part of every day with her friend. By calling on

Miss Bradley he could see Miss Semple. As the best means toward this end he cultivated Agnes through her father. He talked with him, listened to his experiences, and gave him subscriptions for Wesley Chapel, and for the prisoners he could find means to help. He made such a good impression on John Bradley, that he told his daughter he felt sure the good seed he had sown would bring forth good fruit in its season.

Macpherson had a certain welcome at the Semples, but he could not strain it. Madame was not well, company fatigued her, and, though he did not suspect this reason, she was feeling bitterly that she must give up her life-long hospitality—she could not afford to be hospitable any longer. She did not tell Maria this, she said rather, "the laddie wearied her mair than once a week. She wasna strong, and she didna approve o' his excuses for General Clinton. I could tear them all to ravlins," she said, angrily, "but I wad tear mysel' to pieces doing it. He has the reiving, reiving Highland spirit, and nae wonder! The Macphersons have carried fire and sword for centuries."

As for Harry Deane, he, of course, could not come at all, though Madame might have borne him more than once a week, if she had been trusted. But Harry was as uncertain as the wind. He came when no one looked for him, and when he was expected, he was miles away. So there was no possible neutral ground for Love but such as Agnes in her goodnature and wisdom would allow. But Agnes was not difficult. Neil Semple had taught her the sweetness and clemency of love, and she would not de-

prive Maria of those pleasant hours, with which so many days were brightened that would otherwise have been dull and monotonous. For, during the summer's heat the royalist families, who could afford to do so, left the city, and the little tea parties at Agnes Bradley's were nearly the only entertainment at Maria's command.

These were informal and often delightful. Lord Medway knew that about five o'clock Agnes would be setting the tea-tray, and he liked to sit beside Maria and watch her do it. And sometimes Maria made the tea, and poured his out, and put in the sugar and cream with such enchanting smiles and ways that he vowed never tea in this world tasted so refreshing and delicious. And not infrequently Quentin Macpherson would come clattering in when the meal had begun, take a chair at the round table, and drinking his tea a little awkwardly, soothe his self-esteem by an aggressive self-importance. For Lord Medway's nonchalant manner provoked him to such personal assertion as always mortified when the occasion was over. About half-past seven was Neil's hour, and then the conversation became general, and love found all sorts of tender occasions; every glance of meeting eyes, and every clasp of meeting hands, bearing the one sweet message, "I love you, dear!"

It was usually in the morning that Harry came springing up the garden path. There was neither work nor lessons that day, nor any pretense of them. Harry had too much to tell, and both Agnes and Maria hung upon his words as if they held the secret of life and happiness. Now, granted two beautiful

girls with a moderate amount of freedom, and four lovers in that pleasantly painful condition between hope and fear that people in love make, if it is not made for them, and put all in a position where they have the accessories of sunlight and moonlight, a shady garden, a noble river, the scent of flowers, the goodness of fine fruit, the pleasures of the tea-table, and if these young people do not advance in the sweet study their hearts set them, they must be either coldly indifferent, or stupidly selfish.

This company of lovers was however neither stupid nor selfish. In the midst of war's alarms, while fleets and armies were gathering for battle, they were attending very faithfully to their own little drama. Quentin Macpherson had one advantage over both his rivals: he went to the Semple house every Sunday evening, and then he had Maria wholly under his influence. He walked in the garden with her, she made his tea for him, he sat by her side during the evening exercise, sung the psalm from the same Bible, and then, rising with the family, stood, as one of them, while the Elder offered his anxious yet trustful prayer. It was Madame who had thought of connecting this service with the young soldier. "It is little good he can get from thae Episcopals," she said, "and it's your duty, Alexander, to gie him a word in season," and though Macpherson was mainly occupied in watching Maria, and listening to her voice, he had been too well grounded in his faith not to be sensible of the sacredness of those few minutes, and to be insensibly influenced by their spirit.

Neil was never present. When the tea-table was

cleared, he went quietly out, and those who cared to follow him would have been led to the little Wesleyan Chapel on John Street. He always took the same seat in a pew near the door, and there he worshipped for an hour or two the beautiful daughter of John Bradley. He was present to watch them enter. Sometimes the father went to the pulpit, sometimes he went with Agnes to the singing-pew. And to hear these two translating into triumphant song the holy aspirations and longings of Watts and Wesley, was reason enough for any one who loved music to be in Wesley Chapel when they were singing together.

All who have ever loved, all who yet dream of love, can tell the further story of those summer days for themselves. They have only to keep in mind that it had a constant obligato of trumpets and drums and marching men, and a constant refrain, made up of all the rumors of war, victory, and defeat; good news and bad news, fear, and hope, and sighing despair. At length the warm weather gave place to the dreamy hours of the Indian summer. A heavenly veil of silvery haze lay over the river and the city; a veil which seemed to deaden every sound but the shrill chirping of the crickets; and a certain sense of peace calmed for a short time the most restless hearts. The families who had been at various places during the hot months returned to their homes in New York, with fresh dreams of conquest and pleasure, for as yet the terrors of the coming winter were not taken into thought or account. The war was always going to be "over very soon," and General Clinton assured the butterflies of his military

court they might eat, drink, and be merry, for he intended at once to "strike such a blow as would put an end to confederated rebellion for ever." And they gladly believed him.

In less than a week Maria received half-a-dozen invitations to dinners, dances, card parties, and musical recitations. She began at once to look over her gowns, and Agnes came every day to the Semple house to assist in remodeling and retrimming them. They were delightful days long to be remembered. Both the Elder and Madame enjoyed them quite as much as the girls; and even Neil entered into the discussions about colors, and the suitability of guimpes and fringes, with a smiling gravity that was very attractive.

"Uncle Neil thinks he is taking depositions and weighing evidence; see how the claims of pink and amber perplex him!" and then Neil would laugh a little, and decide in such haste that he generally contradicted his first opinion.

The Sunday in this happy week was made memorable by the news which Quentin Macpherson brought. "Some one," he said, "had whispered to General Clinton that it was the intention of Washington to unite with the French army and besiege New York, and Clinton had immediately ordered the troops garrisoning Rhode Island to return to the city with all possible speed. And would you believe it, Elder?" said the young soldier, "they came so hastily that they left behind them all the wood they had cut for winter, and all the forage and stores provided for six thousand men. No sooner were they out of sight than the American army slipped in

and took possession of everything; and now it appears that it was a false report—the general is furious, and is looking for the author of it."

"He needna look very far," answered Semple. "There is a man that dips his sop in the dish wi' him, and that coils him round his finger wi' a mouthful o' words, wha could maist likely give him the whole history o' the matter, for he'll be at the vera beginning o' it."

"Do you mean to say, sir, that our Commander-in-Chief has a traitor for his friend and confident and adviser?"

"I mean to say all o' that. But where will you go and not find Washington's emissaries beguiling thae stupid English?"

"You cannot call the English stupid, sir."

"I can and I will. They are sae sure o' their ain power and wisdom that they are mair than stupid. They are ridic'lus. It makes them the easy tools of every clever American that is willing to take a risk —and they maist o' them are willing."

"But when the English realize——"

"Aye, *when* they realize!"

"Well, sir, they came to realization last month splendidly in that encounter with the privateer, Paul Jones. It was the grandest seafight ever made between seadogs of the same breed. Why, the muzzles of their guns touched each other; the ships were nearly torn to pieces, and three-fourths of the men killed or wounded. Gentlemen, too, as well as fighters though but lowborn men, for I am told they began the combat with a courtesy worthy of the days of chivalry. Both captains bowed and re-

mained uncovered until the foremost guns of the English ship bore on the starboard quarter of the American. Then Captain Paul Jones put on his hat, as a sign that formalities were over, and the battle began, and raged until the English ship was sinking; then she surrendered."

"Mair's the pity!" said the Elder, "she ought to have gone down fighting."

"She saved the great fleet of merchantmen she was convoying from the Baltic; while she was fighting the American every one of them got safe away and into port, and the American ship went down two days afterward—literally died of her wounds and went down to her grave. And by the bye, Mr. Semple, this Paul Jones is a countryman of ours—a Scotchman."

"Aye, is he!—from Kirkcudbright. I was told he had an intention o' sacking Edinburgh. Fair, perfect nonsense!"

"An old friend of the Macphersons—Stuart of Invernalyle—was sought out to defend the town. I had a letter from the family."

"Weel, Stuart could tak' that job easy. The west wind is a vera reliable one in the Firth o' Edinburgh, and it is weel able, and extremely likely, to defend its ain city. In fact, it did do so, for Paul couldna win near, and so he went 'north about' and found the Baltic fleet with the *Serapis* guarding it. Weel, then, he had his fight, though he lost the plunder. But it was a ridic'lus thing in any mortal, menacing the capital o' Scotland wi' three brigs that couldna have sacked a Fife fishing village! And

what is mair," added the old man with a tear glistening in his eyes, "he wouldna have hurt Leith or Edinburgh. Not he! Scots may love America, but they never hate their ain dear Scotland; they wouldna hurt the old land, not even in thought. If put to the question, all o' them would say, as David o' Israel and David o' Scotland baith said, 'let my right hand forget its cunning——' you ken the rest, and if you don't, it will do you good to look up the 137th Psalm."

The stir of admiration concerning these and other events—all favorable to the Americans—irritated General Clinton and made him much less courteous in his manner to both friends and foes. And, moreover, it was not pleasant for him to know that General Washington was entertaining the first French Minister to the United States at Newburgh, and that John Jay was then on his way to Madrid to complete with the Spanish government terms of recognition and alliance. So that even through the calmness of these Indian summer days there were definite echoes of defeat and triumph, whether expressed publicly or discussed so privately that the bird of the air found no whisper to carry.

One day at the end of October, Agnes did not come until the afternoon, and Maria rightly judged that Harry was in New York. There was no need to tell her so, the knowledge was an intuition, and when Agnes said to Madame, "she had a friend, and would like Maria to bring the pelerine they were retrimming to her house, and spend the evening with her," no objection was made. "I shall miss you

baith; so will the Elder," she answered, "but I dare say that English lord is feeling I have had mair than my share o' your company."

"Oh, Madame!" said Agnes, "it is not the English lord, it is a true American boy from—up the river," and Agnes opened her eyes wide as she lifted them to Madame's, and there was some sort of instantaneous and satisfactory understanding. Then she added, "Will you ask Mr. Neil Semple to come for Maria about eight o'clock?"

"There will be nae necessity to ask him. His feet o' their ain accord will find their way to your house, Agnes," said Madame. "Before he has told himsel' where he is going he will be at your doorstep. He must be very fond o' his niece Maria—or of somebody else," and the old lady smiled pleasantly at the blushing girl. Then both girls kissed Madame and stopped at the garden gate to speak to the Elder, and so down the road together full of happy expectation, divining nothing of *One* who went forth with them. How should they? Neither had ever seen the face of sorrow or broke with her the ashen crust. They were not aware of her presence and they heard not the stir of her black mantle trailing upon the dust and the dead leaves as she walked at their side.

"Harry will be here for tea," said Agnes, when they reached the house, and a soft, delightful sense of pleasure to come pervaded the room as they sat sewing and talking until it was time to set the table. And as soon as Agnes began this duty there was a peculiar whistle, and Maria glanced at Agnes, threw aside her work, and went down the garden to meet her lover. He was tying his boat to the little jetty,

and when the duty was done they sat down on the wooden steps and talked of this, and that, and of everything but love, and yet everything they said was a confession of their interest in each other. But the truest love has often the least to say, and those lovers are to be doubted and pitied who must always be seeking assurances, for thus they sow the path of love with thorns. Far happier are they who leave something unsaid, who dare to enter into that living silence which clasps hearts like a book of songs unsung. They will sing them all, but not all at once. One by one, as their hour comes, they will learn them together.

That calm, sweet afternoon was provocative of this very mood. Maria and Harry sat watching the river rocking the boat, and listening to the chirruping of the crickets, and both were satisfied with their own silence. It was a heavenly hour, hushed and halcyon, full of that lazy happiness which is the most complete expression of perfect love. When Agnes called, they walked hand in hand up the garden, and at the tea-table came back again into the world. Harry had much to tell them, and was full of confidence in the early triumph of the Americans.

"Then I hope we shall have peace, and all be friends again," said Maria. She spoke a little wearily, as if she had no faith in her words, and Harry answered her doubt rather than her hope.

"There will not be much friendship this generation," he said; "things have happened between England and America which men will remember until they forget themselves."

After tea, Harry said, "Maria is going with me

to the river to see if the boat is safe," and Agnes, smiling, watched them a little way; then turned again to her china, and without any conscious application began to sing softly the aria of an old English anthem by King:

"I went down into the garden of nuts, to see whether the pomegranates budded—to see whether the pomegranates—the pomegranates budded," * but suddenly, even as her voice rose and fell sweetly to her thoughts, a strange chill arrested the flow of the melody; and she was angry at herself because she had inadvertently wondered, "if the buds would ever open full and flowerwise?"

In about half an hour Agnes, having finished her house duties, went to the door opening into the garden and called Harry and Maria. They turned toward the house when they heard her voice, and she remained in the open door to watch them come through the tall box-shrubs and the many-colored asters. And as she did so, Quentin Macpherson reached the front door—which also stood open—and perceiving Agnes, he did not knock, but waited for her to turn inward. Consequently he saw Harry and Maria, and did not fail to notice the terms of affectionate familiarity between them. The fire of jealousy was kindled in a moment; he strode forward to meet the company, and was received with the usual friendly welcome; for such a situation had often been spoken of as possible, and Agnes was not in the least disconcerted.

"My friend, Mr. Harry Deane, Captain Macpherson," she said, without hesitation, and the Captain

* "Solomon's Song," 6: 11.

received the introduction with his most military air. Then Agnes set herself to keep the conversation away from the war, but that was an impossible thing; every incident of life somehow or other touched it, and before she realized the fact, Harry was deprecating Tryon's outrages in Connecticut, and Macpherson defending them on the ground that "the towns destroyed had fitted out most of the privateers which had so seriously interfered with English commerce. Both the building of the ships and the destruction of the towns for building them are natural incidents of war," he said, and then pointedly, "perhaps you are a native of Connecticut?"

"No," answered Harry, "I am a native of New York."

"Ah! I have not met you before."

"I am a great deal away——" then receiving from Agnes a look of anxious warning, he thought it best to take his leave. Agnes rose and went to the door with him, and Maria wished Captain Macpherson anywhere but in her society; especially as he began to ask her questions she did not wish to answer.

"So Miss Bradley has a lover?" he said, looking pointedly at the couple as they left the room.

"I used to think so once," answered Maria.

"But not now?"

"But not now. Mr. Deane is an old friend, a playmate even."

"I suppose he is a King's man?"

"Ask him; he is still standing at the gate. I talk to him on much pleasanter subjects."

"Love, for instance?"

"Perhaps."

"How can you be so cruel, Maria?"

"It is *Miss Semple's* nature to be cruel."

The reproof snubbed him, and both were silent for some minutes; then the same kind of desultory fencing was renewed, and Maria felt the time to be long and the tension unendurable. She could have cried out with anger. Why had not Agnes let her go to the door with Harry? She had had no opportunity to bid him "good-bye"; and yet, even after Harry had gone, there Agnes stood at the gate, "watching for Uncle Neil, of course," thought Maria, "and no doubt she has a message for me; she might come and give it to me—very likely Harry is at the boat waiting for me—oh, dear! Why does she not come?"

With such thoughts urging her, the very attitude of Agnes was beyond endurance. She stood at the gate as still as if she was a part of it, and at length Maria could bear the delay no longer.

"I wish to speak to Agnes," she said, "will you permit me a moment?"

"Certainly," he answered with an air of offense. "I fear I am in the way of some one or something."

"Oh, no, no!" cried Maria, decisively. "I only want to make her come in. She says the night air is so unhealthy, and yet there she stands in it—bareheaded, too."

"It is an unusually warm evening."

"Yes, but you know there is the malaria. I shall bring her in a moment, you shall see how quickly I am obeyed."

In unison with these words, she rose in a hurry, and as she did so there came through the open window a little stone wrapped in white paper. If she had not moved, it would have fallen into her lap; as it was, it fell on the floor and almost at the feet of Macpherson. He lifted it, and went to the candle. It was a message, as he expected, and read thus:

"Keep that Scot amused for an hour, and meet me at Semple's landing at nine o'clock. Harry.

"Oh! Oh!" he said with an intense inward passion. "I am to be amused! I am to be cajoled! deceived! *that Scot* is to be used for some purpose, and by St. Andrew, I'll wager it is treason. This affair must be looked into—quick, too." With this thought he put the paper in his pocket, and followed Maria to the gate where she stood talking with Agnes.

"I will bid you good-night," he said with a purposed air of offense. I am sure that I am an intruder on more welcome company."

He would listen to no explanations or requests. Maria became suddenly kind, and assumed the prettiest of her coaxing ways, but he knew she was only "amusing" him, and he would not respond to what he considered her base, alluring treachery.

"There, now, Maria! You have been very foolish," said Agnes. "Captain Macpherson is angry. You ought to have been particularly kind to him tonight—after Harry."

"You were so selfish, Agnes—so unreasonably selfish! You might have let me go to the gate with Harry. I never had a chance to say 'good-bye' to

him; there you stood, watching for Uncle Neil, and I was on pins and needles of anxiety. Why didn't you stay with the man, and let me go to the gate?"

"If you must know why; I had some money to give Harry. Could I do that before Captain Macpherson?"

"I hate the man! I am glad he has gone! I hope he will never come again!"

"I do not think he will, Maria."

They went into the house thoroughly vexed with each other, and Maria said in a tone of pique or offense, "I wonder what delays my uncle! I wish he would come!"

In reality Neil was no later than usual, but Maria was quivering with disappointment and annoyance, and when he did arrive it was not possible for any one to escape the influence of an atmosphere charged with the miserable elements of frustrated happiness. Maria was not a girl to bear disagreeable things alone or in silence. She would talk only of Macpherson and his unwelcome visit; "but he always did come when he was not wanted," she said angrily. "Last Sunday when grandmother was sick, and I was writing a long letter to father, and nobody cared to see him at all, enter Captain Macpherson with his satisfied smile, and his clattering sword, and his provoking air of conferring a favor on us by his company. I hate the creature! And I think it is a dreadful thing to make set days for people's visits; we have all got to dislike Sunday afternoons, just for his sake!" and so on, with constant variations.

Fortunately Mr. Bradley came home soon after eight o'clock, and Maria would not make any fur-

ther delay. She had many reasons for her hurry, but undoubtedly the chief one, was a feeling that Agnes ought not to have the pleasure of a conversation between her father and her lover, and probably a walk home with her, and then a walk back with Neil alone. She would go at once, and she would not ask Agnes to go with her. If she was disappointed, it was only a just retribution for her selfishness about Harry. And though she noticed Agnes was depressed and cast down, she was not appeased; "However, I will come in the morning and make all right," she thought; "to-night Agnes may suffer a little. I will come in the morning and make all right."

Yes, she would come in the morning, but little she dreamed on what errand she would come. Still, Maria is not to be blamed over much; there is some truth in every reproach that is made.

CHAPTER VI.

THE INTERCEPTED MESSAGE.

WHILE this unhappy interlude was passing, a far greater sorrow was preparing. Captain Macpherson went at once to his colonel with the pebble-sent note. He told himself that his duty to his King and his colors demanded it, and that no harm could come to the two women except such as was reflected from the trouble that saucy young man might be entitled to. He had no objections to giving him trouble; he felt that he ought to be made to understand a little better what was due to an officer of the King. *"That Scot!"* He flung his plaid passionately over his shoulder and stamped his foot with the offended temper of centuries of Macphersons. As for Maria, he would not think of her. He could not know what the consequences of the interrupted tryst would be, but let her take them! A girl who could prefer quite a common-looking young man to himself needed a lesson. He said over and over that he had only done a duty he would have performed under any circumstances; and he kept reiterating the word "duty,"—still he knew right well that duty in this case had been powerfully seconded by jealousy and by his personal offense.

What action his colonel would take he knew not. He desired to be excused from any part in it, be-

cause of the Semple's hospitality to him. His request was granted; and then he went to his rooms hot with uncertain excitement. The colonel had no sentimental reasons for ignoring what might prove a valuable arrest. Nothing had provoked General Clinton more than the ubiquitous nature of Washington's spies. They were everywhere; they were untiring, unceasing and undaunted. The late reverses, which had mortified every English soldier, had been undoubtedly brought about by the false reports they spread,—no one knew by whose assistance,—and this night might be a turning-point in affairs.

He ordered ten picked men to wait for the boat at Semple's landing. The place was easily reached; they had but to walk to the bottom of the fence, climb over it, and secrete themselves in the little boat-house, or among the shrubbery, if it had yet foliage enough to screen them. He looked over his roll of suspects and found Madame Semple's name among them. Likely enough, her family sympathized with her. It would at least be prudent to secure the husband and son. If they were good royalists, they could easily prove it. Then he sat down to smoke and to drink brandy; he, too, had done his duty, and was not troubled at all about results. The Semples, to him, were only two or three out of sixty thousand reputed royalists in the city. If they were honest, they had little to fear; if they were traitors, they deserved all they would certainly get from Clinton in his present surly mood.

Quite unconscious of what was transpiring, John Bradley was eating a frugal supper of oatmeal and

bread and cheese, and telling his daughter about a handsome saddle that was going up the river to "the man in all the world most worthy of it." Elder Semple was asleep, and Madame, lying in the darkness, was softly praying away her physical pain and her mental anxieties. Suddenly she heard an unusual stir and the prompt, harsh voices of men either quarreling or giving orders.

"It is on our ain place!" and a sick terror assailing her, she cried: "Wake up! Wake up, Alexander! There's men at the door, and angry men, and they're calling you!"

Neil, who was sitting dressed in his room, instantly answered the summons, and was instantly under arrest; and as no effort was made to prevent noise or confusion, the tumult and panic soon reached Maria. She was combing her hair to fretful thoughts, and a keen sense of disappointment; but when Madame entered the room wringing her hands and lamenting loudly, she let the comb fall and stood up trembling with apprehension.

"Maria! Maria! They are taking your grandfather and uncle to prison! Oh, God, my dear auld man! My dear auld man!"

"Grandmother! What are you saying? You must be mistaken—you must be!"

"Come, and see for yoursel';" and Madame flung open the window and with a shriek of futile distress cried, "Alexander, look at me! Speak to me."

At these words the Elder, who was standing with a soldier, lifted his face to the distracted woman, in her white gown at the open window, and cried to her:

"Janet, my dearie, you'll get your death o' cold. It is a' a mistake. Go to your bed, dear woman. I'll be hame in the morning."

Neil repeated this advice, and then there was a sharp order and a small body of men marched forward, and in their midst Harry walked bareheaded and manacled. He tried to look up, for he had heard the colloquy between the Elder and his wife, and understood Maria might be also at the window; but as he turned his head a gigantic Highlander struck him with the flat of his sword, and as the blow fell rattling on the youth's shoulder Maria threw up her hands with a shriek and fell into a chair sobbing.

"Dinna cry that way, Maria, my dearie; they'll be hame in the morning."

"Yes, yes, grandmother! It was the blow on that last prisoner. Did you see it? Did you hear it? Oh, what a shame!"

"Poor lad! I know naething about him; but he is in a terrible sair strait."

"What is he doing here in our house? Surely you know, grandmother?"

"I know naething about him. He is doubtless one o' Washington's messengers—there's plenty o' them round. Why he came near us is mair than I can say." Then a sudden fear made her look intently at Maria, and she asked, "Do you think your Uncle Neil has turned to the American cause?"

"Oh, grandmother, how can you?"

"He has been so much wi' that Agnes Bradley. My heart misgave me at the first about her. Neil is in love, and men in love do anything."

"Uncle Neil is as true a royalist as grandfather."

"See, then, what they have, baith o' them, got for standing by King George. It serves them right! It serves them right! O dear, dear me! What shall we do?"

Two weary hours were spent in such useless conversation; then Madame, being perfectly exhausted, was compelled to go to bed. "We can do naething till morning," she said; "and Neil will hae his plans laid by that time. They will be to bail, doubtless; and God knows where the friends and the money are to come from. But there's plenty o' time for grief to-morrow; go and sleep an hour or two now."

"And you, grandmother? What will you do?"

"He who never fails will strengthen me. When the morn comes I shall be able for all it can bring. This was such a sudden blow I lost my grip."

Alone in her room, Maria felt the full force of the sudden blow. Although Harry's note had missed her, she understood that he had been waiting for a few words with her. Twice before she had been in the garden when he passed up the river, and he had landed and spent a delicious half-hour with her. She was sure now that he had been as much disappointed as herself, and had hoped she would come and say good-bye as soon as she reached home. But who had betrayed him? And why was her grandfather and uncle included in his arrest?

For some time she could think of nothing but her lover walking so proudly in the midst of his enemies; reviled by them, struck by them, yet holding his head as authoritatively as if he was their captain, rather than their prisoner. Then she remem-

bered Agnes, and at first it was with anger. "If she had not been so selfish, Harry would not have needed to take such a risk!" she cried. "It is dreadful! dreadful! And just as soon as it is light I must go and tell her. Her father must now know all; he ought to have been told long ago. I shall insist on her telling now, for Harry's life is first of all, and his father has power some way or other."

Thus through the long hours she wept and complained and blamed Agnes and even herself, and perhaps most of all was angry with the intrusive Macpherson, whose unwelcome presence had been the cause of the trouble. And, oh! what arid torturing vigils are those where God is not! Madame lying on her bed with her hands folded over her breast and thoughts heavenward, was at peace compared with this tumultuous little heart in the midst of doubt, darkness, and the terror of dreadful death for one dear to her. She knew not what to abandon, nor what to defend; her brain seemed stupefied by calamity so inevitable. And yet, it was not inevitable; it had depended for many minutes on herself. A word, a look, and Agnes would have understood her desire; and half a dozen times before she had made the movement which was just *too late;* her heart had urged her to call her friend. But she had doubted, wavered, and delayed, and so given to Destiny the very weapons that were used against her.

As soon as the morning dawned she dressed herself. Before her grandmother came down stairs it was imperative on her to see Agnes and tell her

what had happened. A dismal, anxious stillness had succeeded the storm of her terror and grief; a feeling of outrage, of resentment against events, and an agony of love and pity, as she remembered Harry smitten and helpless in the power of a merciless foe. She had now one driving thought and purpose—the release of her lover. She must save the life he had risked for her sake, though she gave her own for it.

As she went through the gray dawning she was sensitive to some antagonism, even in Nature. The unseasonable warmth of the previous evening had been followed by a frost. The faded grass snapped under her fleet steps; the last foliage had withered during the night, and was black and yellow as death, and everything seemed to shiver in the pale light. And though the waning moon yet hung low in the west, and all the mystery and majesty of earth was round her, Maria was only conscious of the chill terror in her heart, and of the chill, damp mist from the river which enfolded her like a cloak, and was the very atmosphere of sorrow.

When she reached the Bradley home all was shut and still; the very house seemed to be asleep, but why did its closed door affect her so painfully? She went round to the kitchen and found the slave woman Mosella bending over a few blazing chips, making herself a cup of tea. The woman looked at her wonderingly, and when Maria said, "Mosella, I must see Miss Agnes at once," she rose without a word and opened the garden door of the house. The shutters were all closed, the stairway dim, and the creaking of the steps under her feet made her

quiver. It was an hour too early for light and life, and a noiseless noise around her seemed to protest against this premature invasion of the day.

She entered the room of her friend very softly. It was breathless, shadowy, and on the white bed Agnes was lying, asleep. For a moment Maria stood looking at the orderly place and the unconscious woman. The pure pallor of her cheeks had the flush of healthy sleep; her brown hair, braided, lay loose upon her pillow; her white hands upon the white coverlet. She was the image of deep, dreamless, peaceful oblivion. It seemed a kind of wrong to awaken her; but though the eyes of Agnes were closed, Maria's gaze called to the soul on guard behind them, and without one premonitory movement she opened them wide and saw Maria at her bedside. A quick fear leaped into her heart. She was momentarily speechless. She laid her hand on Maria's arm, and looked at her with apprehending inquiry.

"*Harry!*" said Maria, and then she sat down and covered her face and began to cry softly. There was no necessity to say more. Agnes understood. She rose and began to dress herself, and in a few minutes asked, though almost in a whisper:

"Is he taken?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"At our landing."

"When?"

"Last night."

"Why did you not send me word last night? Neil would have come."

"Neil was arrested, and also my dear old grandfather. It is shameful! shameful!"

"What was Harry doing at your landing?"

"I don't know. I was in my room. I was half-undressed, combing my hair out, when grandmother rushed to me with the news. It is not my fault, Agnes."

"Did you ever meet Harry at your landing, Maria?"

"Only twice, both times in the daylight. He was passing and happened to see me. There was no tryst between us; and I know nothing about last night, except——"

"Except what?"

"That if you had given him a chance to say 'Good-bye' to me here, he would not have thought of stopping at our landing; but," she added in a weary voice, "you were watching for Uncle Neil, and so, of course, you forgot other people."

"Don't be cruel, Maria, as well as unjust."

"All the same, it is the truth."

"How was he discovered? You surely know that?"

"No, I do not. There were at least ten or twelve soldiers—Highlanders. One of them struck Harry."

"Oh, why do you tell me? Who could have betrayed him? Macpherson? You know you offended him."

"It could not be Macpherson. He never saw Harry before. He knew nothing about him. He thought his name was Deane. If it had been Mac-

pherson, your landing, not ours, would have been watched."

"No; for he saw you and Harry coming through the garden hand-in-hand. I am sure he did. He went away in a fit of jealousy, and he would think of your landing as well as ours. But all that is nothing. We have but a few hours in which to try and save his life. I must awake father and tell him. It will break his heart."

"You ought to have told him——"

"I know."

"What can I do?"

"Women can do nothing but suffer. I am sorry with all my soul for you, Maria, and I will let you know what father does. Go home to your poor grandmother; she will need all the comfort you can give her."

"I am sorry for you, Agnes; yes, I am! I will do anything I can. There is Lord Medway, he loves me; and General Clinton loves him, I know he does; I have seen them together."

"Father is first. I must awaken him. Leave me now, Maria, dear. None but God can stand by me in this hour."

Then Maria kissed her, and Agnes fell upon her knees, her arms spread out on her bed and her face buried in them. There were no words given her; she could not pray; but when the Gate of Prayer is closed the Gate of Tears is still open. She wept and was somewhat helped, though it was only by that intense longing after God which made her cry out, "O that I knew where to find Him, that I might come into His presence!"

When she went to her father's door he was already awake. She heard him moving about his room, washing and dressing, and humming to himself in strong snatches a favorite hymn tune; no words seemed to have come to him, for the melody was kept by a single syllable that served to connect the notes. Nevertheless, the tone was triumphant and the singer full of energy. It made Agnes shiver and sicken to listen to him. She sat down on the topmost stair and waited. It could not be many minutes, and nothing for or against Harry could be done till the world awoke and went to business. Very soon the hymn tune ceased, and there was a few minutes of a silence that could be felt, for it was threaded through by a low, solemn murmur easy to translate,—the man was praying. When he came out of his room he saw Agnes sitting on the stair, and as soon as she lifted her face to him he was frightened and asked sharply:

"What are you doing there, Agnes? What has happened?"

She spoke one word only, but that word went like a sword to the father's heart,—*"Harry!"*

He repeated the word after her: "Harry! Is he ill? Let me see the letter, where is he? With Doctor Brudenel? Can't you speak, girl?"

"Harry is here, in New York, in prison?"

The words fell shivering from her lips; she raised herself, watching her father's face the while, for she thought he was going to fall. He shook like a great tree in a storm, and then retreated to the door of his room and stood with his back against it. He could not speak, and Agnes was afraid.

"Father," she said in a low, passionate voice of entreaty, "we have the boy to save. Do not lose yourself. You have *your Father* to lean upon."

"I know! I feel! Go and make me a cup of coffee. I will be ready when you call me."

Then he went back into his room and shut the door, and Agnes, with a sick, heavy heart, prepared the necessary meal. For though danger, sorrow and death press on every side, the body must have sustenance; and every-day meals, that look so tragically common and out of place must go on as usual. But it was a little respite and she was grateful, because in it her father would talk the trouble over with God before she had to explain it to him. The interval was a short one, but during it John Bradley found Him who is "a very present help in every hour of need." He came down to his coffee in full possession of himself and ready for the fight before him. But he had also realized the disobedience which had brought on this sorrow, and the deception which had sanctioned the boy in his disobedience. Therefore Agnes was afraid when she saw his severe eyes, and shrank from them as from a blow, and large tears filled her own and rolled down her white cheeks unchecked.

"Agnes," he said, "tell me the whole truth. I must know everything, or you may add your brother's murder to the other wrongdoing. When did he come back to America?"

"Six months after you sent him to England. He said he could not, durst not, stay there. He thought that God might have some work that needed *just him* to do it. I think Harry found that work."

"Why did you not tell me at the time?"

"I was in Boston, at school, when Harry first came to me, and we talked together then about telling you. But at that time both of us supposed you to be a King's man, and the party feeling was then riotously cruel. Harry had been three months with Washington, and his peculiar fitness for the New York Secret Service had been found out. Still, Washington took no unfair advantage of his youth and enthusiasm. He told him he would be one of a band of young men who lived with their lives in their hands. And when Harry answered, 'General, if I can bring you information that will help Freedom forward one step, my life gladly for it,' Washington's eyes shone, and he gave Harry his hand and said, 'Brave boy! Your father must be a happy man.'"

She paused here and looked at the father, and saw that his face was lifted and that a noble pride strove with a noble pain for the mastery. So she continued: "Harry *has* helped Freedom forward. He found out, while pretending to fish for the garrison at Stony Point, the best way across the marsh and up the rocks. He helped to set afloat the reports that brought Tryon back from Connecticut, and the garrison from Rhode Island. He has prepared the way for many a brave deed, taken all the danger and the labor, getting no fame and wanting none, his only aim to serve his country and to be loved and trusted by Washington. If we erred in keeping these things from you, it has been an error of love. And when we knew you also were serving your country in your own way, Harry was

sure you would do it better and safer if you were not always looking for him—fearing for him. Oh, father! surely you see how his presence would have embarrassed you and led to suspicion."

"I would like to have seen the boy," he said, softly, as if he were thinking the words to himself.

"He saw you often, never came to the city without passing the shop to see you; and it made both of us happy to believe that very soon now he would dare to speak to you and to say, 'Father, forgive me.'"

"I must go to him, Agnes. Harry's life must be saved, or I, John Bradley, will know the reason why. Yes, and if he has to die there are some big men here, playing double-face, that will die with him. I know them——"

"Oh, father! father! What are you saying? Vengeance is not ours. Would it bring Harry back to us?"

"It is more than I can bear. Who was the informer? Tell me that. And where was he taken?"

"I cannot tell who informed. He was taken with his little boat at Elder Semple's landing by a party of Scotch Highlanders."

"What on earth was he doing at Semple's? Do you think the Elder, or that fine gentleman Neil, gave information?"

"They were both arrested with Harry. They also are in prison."

"Am I losing my senses? The Semples! They are royalists, known royalists, bitter as gall. What was Harry doing at their place? Tell me."

"I do not certainly know, father. I think he may

have gone there hoping that Maria would come down to the river to say a good-bye to him."

"*Maria!* That is it, of course. If a man is to be led to destruction and death, it is some woman who will do the business for him. I warned you about that Maria. My heart misgave me about the whole family. So Harry is in love with her! That is your doing, girl. What business had you to let them meet at all? If Harry perishes, I shall find it hard to forgive you; hard to ever see you again. All this sorrow for your sentimental nonsense about Maria. If she had been kept out of Harry's life, he would have gone safely and triumphantly on to victory with the rest of us. But you must have your friend and your friend's brother, and your own brother must pay the price of it."

"Oh, father, be just! Even if you cannot pity me, be just. I am suffering as much as I can bear."

Then he rose and put on his hat and coat. "Stay where you are," he said. "I will not have women meddling with what I have now to do. Don't leave the house for anyone or anything."

"You will send me some word, father. I shall be in an agony of suspense."

"If there is any word to send, I will send it." Then he went away without kissing her, without one of his ordinary tender words; he left her alone with her crushing sorrow, and the consciousness that upon her he would lay the blame of whatever disaster came to Harry. She had no heart for her household duties, and she left the unwashed china and went back to her room. She was yet in a state

of pitiful bewilderment; her grief was so certain, its need was so urgent, and at that hour Heaven seemed so far off; and yet she questioned her soul so eagerly for the watchword that should give her that stress of spirit which would connect her with the Unseen World and permit her to claim its invincible help.

Agnes had told her father that it was Highlanders who arrested Harry, and Bradley went first to their quarters. There he learned that the young man had disclaimed connection with any regiment whatever; and, being in citizen's clothes and wearing no arms, his claim had been allowed and his case turned over to the Military Court of Police. So far it was favorable; the cruel haste of a court martial shut the door of hope; but John Bradley knew the Court of Police was composed of men who put financial arguments before all others. He was, however, too early, an hour too early, to see any one; and the prisoner was under watch in one of the guard-houses and could not be approached.

He wandered back to his shop utterly miserable and restless and wrote a letter to Thomas Curtis, a clever lawyer, and a partner of Neil Semple, explaining the position of his son and begging him to be at the Court of Police when it opened. This letter he carried to the lawyer's office and paid the boy in attendance to deliver it immediately on the arrival of his master. Then he went back to his shop for money, and as he was slowly leaving the place Lord Medway spoke to him. He had his rifle over his shoulder and was going with a friend to Long Island to shoot birds. The sight of the

man made John Bradley's heart leap and burn. He had been waiting for some leading as to the way he ought to take, and he felt that it had been given him.

"Good morning, Mr. Bradley," said the nobleman.

"My lord, turn back with me to my shop. I have something of the greatest importance to tell you."

Medway smiled: "My hunting is of the greatest importance at present, Mr. Bradley, for my friend, Colonel Pennington, is waiting for me; but if I can be of service——"

"I think you can; at least, listen to me."

Medway bent his head in acquiescence, and Bradley led the way to the small room behind his shop, which had been his sitting and dining room while his daughter was at school. He plunged at once into the subject of his anxieties.

"There was a prisoner taken last night."

"A young man in a boat; I heard of it. General Clinton thinks they may have made an important arrest."

"He is my son—my only son! I did not know until an hour ago that he was in America. I sent him to England at the beginning of the war—to a fine school there—and I thought he was safe; and he has been here, one of Washington's scouts, carrying messages from camp to camp, in and out of New York in all kinds of disguises, spreading reports and gathering reports, buying medicines, and clothing, and what not; doing, in short, duties which in every case were life and death matters.

For three years or more he has done these things safely; last night he was discovered."

"And you thought he was in England, safe and comfortable, and learning his lessons?"

"I did, and thanked God for it."

"Now, I would offer thanks for the other things. If I were an American it would gladden my heart to have a son like that. The young man thinks he has been doing his duty; be a little proud of him. I'll be bound he deserves it. Who arrested him?"

"Some soldiers from the Highland regiment."

"How did they happen to know? Could Macpherson have informed? Oh, impossible! What am I saying? Where was he taken?"

"At Elder Semple's landing."

"You confound me, Bradley. I will stake my honor on the Semples's loyalty—father and son both. What was he doing there?"

"He had the old reason for calamity—a woman. He is in love with the Elder's granddaughter, and Agnes thinks he must have landed hoping to see her."

"You mean, he had a tryst with her?"

"I only surmise. I can tell nothing surely."

"I will go with you to court, Bradley. Can you send a man with a message to Colonel Pennington?"

This done they went out together, and many looked curiously at the lord and the saddler walking the streets of New York in company. For in those days the lines of caste were severely drawn. When they entered the courtroom the case of the Semples was being heard; but Harry sat a little

apart, on either side of him a soldier. The father fixed his eyes upon him, and a proud flush warmed his white face at the sight of the lad's dauntless bearing and calm, almost cheerful, aspect.

Lord Medway looked first toward the Semples, and conspicuously bowed to both of them. The Elder was evidently sick, fretful, and suffering. Neil was wounded in every fiber of his proud nature. The loyalty, the honor, the good name of the Semples had been, he believed, irrevocably injured; for he was lawyer enough to know that it is nearly as bad to be suspected as to be guilty. And, small as the matter seemed in comparison, he was intensely mortified at the personal disarray of his father and himself. The men who arrested them had given them no time to arrange their clothing, and Neil knew they looked more suspiciously guilty for want of their clean laces and the renovating influences of water and brushes.

The assistant magistrate, Peter DuBois, was just questioning Elder Semple.

"Look at the prisoner taken on your premises, Mr. Semple. Do you know him?"

"I never saw him in a' my life before his arrest."

"Did you know he was using your landing?"

"Not I. I was fast asleep in my bed."

"Mr. Neil Semple, what have you to say?"

"I was sitting partially dressed, reading in my room. I have no knowledge whatever of the young man, nor can I give you any reason why our landing should have been used by him."

Mr. Curtis then spoke eloquently of the unstained loyalty of the Semples, and of their honorable life

for half a century in the city of New York. But Peter DuBois held that they were not innocent, inasmuch as they had been so careless of His Majesty's interests as to permit their premises to be used for treasonable purposes.

"The Court must first prove the treasonable purposes," said Mr. Curtis.

"The Court proposes to do so," answered DuBois. "Henry Deane, stand up!" and as he did so Bradley uttered a sharp cry and rose to his feet also. In this hour Harry looked indeed a son to be proud of. He showed no fear, and was equally free from that bluster that often cloaks fear, but raised a face calm and cheerful—the face of a man who knows that he has done nothing worthy of blame.

"Henry Deane," said DuBois, "is there anyone in New York who knows you?"

"I do!" shouted John Bradley. "He is my son! My dear son, Henry Deane Bradley;" and with the words he marched to his son's side and threw his arms about his neck.

"Oh, father! father, forgive me!"

"Oh, Harry! Harry! I have nothing to forgive!" and he kissed him in the sight of the whole court, and wept over him like a mother.

The whole affair had been so sudden, so startling and affecting, that it was not at once interrupted. But in a few moments the examination proceeded, DuBois asking, "Do you know the Semples?"

"I have seen them often. I have never spoken to either of them in all my life."

"What took you to their landing, then?"

"I know it so well. When I was a little boy I

used to borrow Elder Semple's boat if I wished to fish or row, because I knew they were busy in the city and would not miss it. So I got used to their landing years ago."

"Had you any special reason for going there last night?"

"Yes. It was a good place to wait until the moon rose."

"No other reason?"

"Habit."

"Nothing to get there?"

"Nothing at all."

"No one to see there?"

"No one."

Lord Medway sighed heavily. The words were a tremendous relief. If the young man had named Maria it would have been shameful and unbearable. He began now to take more interest in him.

"You refused to tell last night," said DuBois, "to whom you were carrying the clothing and *the saddle* that was in your boat. Will you now name the person or persons?"

"No. I refuse to name them."

"From whom did you receive or purchase these articles?"

"I refuse to say."

"Perhaps from the Semples?"

"Certainly not. I never received and never bought a pin's worth from the Semples."

In fact, no evidence of complicity could either be found or manufactured against the Semples, and Mr. Curtis demanded their honorable acquittal. But they were good subjects for plunder, and

DuBois had already intimated to Judge Matthews how their purses could be reached. In pursuance of this advice, Judge Matthews said:

"The loyalty of Alexander Semple and of his son, Neil Semple, cannot be questioned; but they have been unfortunately careless of His Majesty's rights in permitting their premises to be of aid and comfort to rebels; and therefore, as an acknowledgment of this fault, and as a preventative to its recurrence, Alexander Semple is fined two hundred pounds and Neil Semple one hundred pounds. The prisoners are free upon their own recognizances until the fifteenth day of November, when they must appear in this court and pay the fines as decided."

The Elder heard the decision in a kind of stupefaction. Neil, neither by himself or his lawyer, made any protest. What use was there in doing so? They had been sentenced by a court accountable to no tribunal whatever: a court arbitrary and illegal, that troubled itself neither with juries nor oaths, and from which there was no appeal. Lord Medway watched the proceedings with indignation, and the feeling in the room was full of sympathy for the two men. Neil's haughty manner and stern face betrayed nothing of the anger he felt, but the Elder was hardly prevented from speaking words which would have brought him still greater loss. As it was, it taxed Neil's strength and composure to the uttermost to get his father with dignity away from the scene. He gave him his arm, and whispered authoritatively, "Do not give way, father! Do not open your lips!" So the old gentleman straightened himself, and, leaning heavily

on his son, reached the lobby before he fell into a state bordering on collapse.

Neil placed him in a chair, got him water, and was wondering where he could most easily procure a carriage, when the sound of wheels coming at a furious rate arrested his attention. They stopped at the court house, and as Neil went to the door the lovely Madame Jacobus sprang out of the vehicle.

"Neil!" she cried. "Neil Semple! I only heard an hour ago, I came as soon as the horses were ready, it is disgraceful. Where is the Elder? Can I take him home?"

"Madame, it will be the greatest kindness. He is ready to faint."

The Elder looked at her with eyes full of tears.

"Madame," he said, "they have fined me in my auld age for a misdemeanor"—and then he laughed hysterically. "I hae lived fifty years in New York, and I am fined—I hae——"

She stopped the quavering voice with a kiss, and with Neil's help led him gently to her carriage; and as soon as he reached its friendly shelter he closed his eyes and looked like one dead. Madame was in a tempest of rage. "It is just like the ravening wolves," she said. "They saw an opportunity to rob you,—you need not tell me, I know Matthews! He has the winter's routs and dances for his luxurious wife and daughters to provide for, as well as what he calls his own 'damned good dinners.' How much did he mulct you in? Never mind telling me now, Neil, but come and lunch with me to-morrow; I shall have something to say to you then."

She had the Elder's hand in her's as she spoke, and she did not loosen her clasp until she saw him safely at his own home and in the care of his wife. She remained a few moments to comfort Madame Semple, then, divining they would be best alone with their sorrow, she went away with a reminder to Neil that she wished to speak to him privately on the following day.

"It is as if God sent her," said Madame gratefully.

"Get me to my bed, Janet, dearie," said the Elder. "I'll just awa' out o' this warld o' sorrows and wrongs and robbery."

"You'll just stop havering and talking nonsense, Alexander. Are you going to die and leave me my lane for a bit o' siller? I'm ashamed o' you. Twa or three hundred pounds! Is that what you count your life worth? Help your father to his bed, Neil, and I'll bring him some gude mutton broth. He's hungry and faint and out o' his sleep—it tak's little to make men talk o' dying. Parfect nonsense!"

"You don't know, Janet Semple——"

"Yes, I do know, Alexander. Quit whining, and put a stout heart to a steep hill. You hae a wife and sons and friends yet about you, and you talk o' dying! I'll not hear tell o' such things, not I!"

But when the Elder had taken a good meal and fallen asleep, Janet spoke with less spirit to her son. And Neil was in a still fury; he found it difficult to answer his mother's questions.

"The money is to be found, and that at once," he said. "Father will not rest until it is paid; and I have not the least idea where I can procure it."

"You must sell some o' that confiscated property you and your father wared all your ready money on," said Janet bitterly.

"At the present time it is worth nothing, mother; and houses and lands are not sold at an hour's notice. I suppose if I ask Batavius DeVries he will help father. I think Curtis can manage my share of the blackmail."

"That poor lad wha has made a' the mischief, what of him?"

"He is John Bradley's son." Then Neil described the scene in the courtroom, and Madame's eyes filled with tears as she said, "I never thought so well o' the Bradleys before. Poor Agnes!"

Yes, "poor Agnes!" Neil was feeling a consuming impatience to be with her, to comfort her and help her to bear whatever might be appointed.

"So the lad is to be tried in the Military Police Court. Is not that a good thing?"

"Yes. John Bradley has money. It is all the 'law' there is to satisfy in that court."

"Are they trying him to-day?"

"Yes. I heard his case called as we left the room. Where is Maria?"

"She has cried herself blind, deaf and dumb. She is asleep now. I went to tell her you were hame, and she was sobbing like a bairn that has been whipped ere it shut its eyes. I dinna waken her."

Then Neil went to his room to dress himself. He felt as if no care and no nicety of apparel could ever atone for the crumpled disorder of his toilet in the courtroom, which had added itself so keenly to his sense of disgrace. Then he must go to Agnes;

her brother was his brother, and, though he had brought such shame and loss on the Semples, still he must do all he could for him, for the sake of Agnes. And there was the money to find, and Madame Jacobus to see! A sense of necessary haste pressed him like a goad. Not a moment must be lost, for he felt through every sense of his mortal and spiritual being that Agnes was calling him.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PRICE OF HARRY'S LIFE.

He heard Agnes calling him, and he resolved to go at once to her. And never had he looked handsomer than at this hour, for he had clothed himself with that rich and rigid propriety he understood so well while the sense of injustice under which he so inwardly burned gave to him a haughty dignity, suiting his grave face and lofty stature to admiration. He went very softly along the upper corridor of his home, but Madame heard his step, and opening her door, said in a whisper:

"Your father has fallen asleep, Neil, and much he needed sleep. Where are you going?"

"I am going back to the court. I wish to know what has been done in Bradley's case."

"Why trouble yourself with other people's business? The lad has surely given us sorrow enough."

"He is her brother—I mean——"

"I know who you mean; weel, then, go your way; neither love nor wisdom will win a hearing from you on that road."

"There is money to be found somewhere, mother. Until his fine is paid, father will be miserable. I want to borrow the amount as soon as possible."

"*Borrow!* Has it come to that?"

"It has, for a short time. I think Captain DeVries will let me have it. He ought to."

"He'll do naething o' the kind. I would ask any other body but him."

"There are few to ask. I must get it where I can. Curtis will advance one hundred pounds for me."

"They who go borrowing go sorrowing. I'm vexed for you, my dear lad. It is the first time I ever heard tell o' a Semple seeking money not their ain."

"It is our own fault, mother. If father and I had taken your advice and let confiscated property alone we should have had money to lend to-day; certainly, we should have been able to help ourselves out of all difficulties without asking the assistance of strangers."

The confession pleased her. "What you say is the truth," she answered; "but everybody has a fool up their sleeve some time in their life. May God send you help, Neil, for I'm thinking it will hae to come by His hand; and somehow, I dinna believe He'll call on Batavius DeVries to gie you it."

With these words she retreated into her room, closing the door noiselessly, and Neil left the house. As soon as he was in the public road he saw Batavius standing at his garden gate, smoking and talking with Cornelius Haring and Adrian Rutgers. They were discussing Bradley's trouble and the Semples's connection with it, and Neil felt the spirit of their conversation. It was not kindly, and as he approached them Haring and Rutgers walked away. For a moment Batavius seemed inclined to do the

same, but Neil was too near to be avoided without intentional offense, and he said to himself, "I will stand still." Out of my own way I will not move, because Neil Semple comes." So he stolidly continued to smoke, staring idly before him with a gaze fixed and ruminating.

"Good afternoon, Captain. Are you at liberty for a few minutes?" asked Neil.

"Yes. What then, Mr. Semple? I heard tell, from my friends, that you are in trouble."

"We have been fined because Mr. Bradley's son used our landing. It is a great injustice, for in this matter we were as innocent as yourself."

"That is not the truth, sir. If, like me, you had boarded in your house a few soldiers, then the care and the watch would have been their business, not yours. Those who don't act prudently must feel the chastisement of the government; but so! I will have nothing to do with the matter. It is a steady principle of mine never to interfere in other people's affairs."

"There is no necessity for interference. The case is settled. My father is fined two hundred pounds, a most outrageous wrong."

"Whoever is good and respectable is not fined by the government."

"In our case there was neither law nor justice. It was simple robbery."

"I know not what you mean. The government is the King, and I do not talk against either King or government. The Van Emerlies, who are always sneering at the King, have had to take twenty-seven per cent. out of the estate of a bankrupt cousin; and

the Remsens, who are discontented and always full of complaints, have spoiled their business. God directs things so that contentment leads to wealth."

"I was speaking of neither the King nor his government, but of the Military Police Court."

"Oh! Well, then, I think all the stories I hear about its greediness and tyranny are downright lies."

"I must, however, assert that this court has been unjust and tyrannical both to my father and myself."

"That is your business, not mine."

"I was in hopes that you would feel differently. My father has often helped you out of tight places. I thought at this time you would remember that. There was that cargo at Perth Amboy, but for my father, it had gone badly with you!

"Yes, yes! I give good for good, but not to my own cost. People who go against the government and are in trouble are not my friends. I do not meddle with affairs that are against the government. It is dangerous, and I am a husband and a father, not a fool."

"To assist my father for a few days, till I can turn property into money, is not going against the government."

"You will not turn property into money these days; it is too late. I, who am noted for my prudence, got rid of all my property at the beginning of the war; you and your father bought other people's houses, while I sold mine. So! I was right, as I always am."

"Then you had no faith in the King's cause, even

at the beginning; and I have heard it said you are not unfriendly now to the rebels."

"*Ja!* I give the Americans a little, quietly. One must sail as the wind serves; and who can tell which way it will blow to-morrow? I am a good sailor; never shall I row against wind and tide. Who am I, Batavius DeVries, to oppose the government? It is one of my most sacred principles to obey the government."

"Then if the Americans succeed, you will obey their government? Your principles are changeable, Captain."

"It is a bad principle not to be able to change your principles. The world is always changing. I change with it. That is prudent, for I will not stand alone, or be left behind. That is my way; your ways do not suit me."

"This talk comes to nothing. To be plain with you, I want to borrow two hundred pounds for a month. I hope you will lend it. In the Perth Amboy matter my father stood for you in a thousand pounds."

"That is eaten bread, and your father knew I could secure the money. I wish I could help Elder Semple, but it would not be prudent."

"Good gracious, sir!"

"Oh, then, you must keep such words to yourself! I say it would not be prudent. He has swamped himself with other men's houses, his business is decayed, he is old; and you are also in a bad way and cannot help him, or why do you come to me?"

"I can give you good security, good land——"

"Land! What is good land to me? It will not be useful in my business. And there is another thing: you are not particular in your company. I have heard about your Methodist friends; there is Vestryman William Ustick, he was a Methodist servant, and he has become bankrupt; so, then——"

"You will not repay my father's frequent loans to you. If your father-in-law, Joris Van Heemskirk, was here——"

"I am not Joris Van Heemskirk. He is a rebel. I, who have always been loyal, have made twelve thousand dollars this last year. Is not that a hint for me to go on in the right way?"

Without waiting for the end of this self-complacent tirade, Neil went forward. Batavius was only a broken reed in his hand. Never before in all his life had he felt such humiliating anxiety. Even the slipping away of Haring and Rutgers, and the uncivil refusal of Batavius, were distinctly new and painful experiences. He felt, through Haring and Rutgers, the public withdrawal of sympathy and respect; and through Batavius, the coming bitterness of the want of ready money. The Semples had been fined; they were suspects; their names would now be on the roll of the doubtful, and it would be bad policy for the generality of citizens to be friendly with them. And the necessity for borrowing money revealed poverty, which otherwise they would have been able to conceal. He knew, also, that he would have to meet many such rebuffs, and he was well aware that his own proud temper would make them a pleasant payment to many whom he had offended by his exclusiveness.

As he approached the Bradley house he put all these bitter thoughts aside. What were they in comparison with the sorrow Agnes was compelled to endure? His whole soul went out to the suffering girl, and he blamed himself for allowing any hope of Batavius to delay him. The very house had taken on an air of loneliness and calamity. The door was closed, the blinds down, and the wintry frost that had blackened the garden seemed in some inscrutable way to have touched the dwelling also. He saw the slave woman belonging to the Bradleys talking to a group of negroes down the road, and he did not call her. If Agnes was within, he would see her; and if her father had returned, they would probably be together.

Thinking thus, he knocked loudly, and then entered the little hall. All was silent as the grave. "Agnes! Agnes!" he cried; and the next moment she appeared at the head of the stairs. "Agnes!" he cried again, and the word was full of love and sorrow, as he stretched out his arms to the descending girl. She was whiter than snow, her eyes were heavy and dark with weeping, her hair had fallen down, and she still wore the plain, blue gingham dress she had put on while Maria was telling her tragical tale. Yet in spite of these tokens of mental disturbance, she was encompassed by the serene stillness of a spirit which had reached the height of "Thy will be done."

When her father left her, smitten afresh by his anger she had fled to her room, and locking the door of this sanctuary, she had sat for two hours astonished, stupefied by the inevitable, speechless

and prayerless. Yet while she was musing the fire burned; she became conscious of that secret voice in her soul which is the spirit that helpeth our infirmities, and ere she was aware she began to pray. It was as if she stood alone in some great hall of the universe, with an infinite, invisible audience of spirits watching her. Then the miracle of the ladder between heaven and earth was renewed, and angels of help and blessing once more ascended and descended. An inward, deep, untroubled peace calmed the struggle of her soul; one by one the clouds departed and the light steadily grew until fears were slain, and doubts had become a sure confidence that

> Naught should prevail against her or disturb
> Her cheerful faith that all which looked so dark
> Was full of blessing.

She was sitting waiting when she heard Neil's call, and Oh! how sweet is the voice of love in the hour of anxious sorrow! She never thought of her appearance or her dress; she hasted to Neil, and he folded her to his heart and for the first time touched her white cheek with his lips. She made no resistance; it was not an hour for coy withdrawals, and they understood, amid their silent tears, far more than any future words could explain.

Then Neil told her all that had happened, and when he described John Bradley's open recognition of his son she smiled proudly and said, "That was like father. If I had been there I would have done the same. It is a long time," she said, looking anxiously at Neil. "Will father soon be home?"

"I expected to find him here. I will go to the court now; the trial ought to be over."

But complications had arisen in what at first seemed to be a case that proved itself. Harry was not easily managed. He admitted that he had been in America for more than three years, but declared that his father had been totally ignorant of his presence. When asked where he had dwelt and how he had employed himself during that time, he gave to every question the same answer, "I refuse to tell."

Then the saddle found in his boat was brought forward, and he was asked from whom he received it and to whom he was taking it. And to both these questions there was the same reply, "I refuse to tell."

"It is indisputably a Bradley saddle," said the assistant magistrate, DuBois. "Let John Bradley identify it."

Bradley came forward, looked at the saddle, and answered, "I made it; every stitch of it."

"For whom? Mr. Bradley?"

"I should have few saddles to make if I talked about my patrons in this place. I refuse to tell for whom I made it."

"The court can fine you, sir, for contempt of its requests."

"I would rather pay the fine than bring my patron's name in question and cause him annoyance."

There was considerable legal fencing on this subject, but nothing gained; a parcel also found in the boat was opened and its contents spread out for examination. They consisted of a piece of damasse for a lady's gown, some lace, two pairs of silk

stockings, two pairs of gloves, some ribbon, and a fan that had been mended. Everything in this parcel was obviously intended for a woman, but Harry was as obdurately noncommittal as he had been about the saddle. Nothing could be gained by continuing an examination so one-sided, and the next witness called was Captain Quentin Macpherson. He came forward with more than his usual haughty clangor, and was first asked if he had ever seen the prisoner before.

"Yes," he answered, "for about half an hour yesterday evening, say, between half-past seven and eight o'clock."

"Did you have any conversation with him?"

"Very little. When I began to question him about his residence he rose and went away."

"Who else was present?"

"Miss Bradley and Miss Semple."

"Tell the court what occurred when the prisoner left."

"Miss Bradley went to the gate with him, Miss Semple remained with me. I noticed that she was anxious, and found my company disagreeable; and suddenly she excused herself and left the room. As she did so a pebble was thrown through the window; it fell at my feet; a note was wrapped round it, and I read the note."

There has a low *hiss-s-s-s!* at these words, which pervaded the whole room. Macpherson waited until it had subsided, and then in a loud, defiant voice repeated his last sentence, "I read the note, and acted upon it."

The note was then handed to him, and he posi-

tively recognized it, and as it was not his note, nor intended for him, he was unable to protest against DuBois's reading it aloud. It made a pleasant impression. Men looked at the boy prisoner sympathetically, and a little scornful laugh pointed the epithet *"that Scot!"* which infuriated Macpherson.

In this favorable atmosphere Mr. Curtis rose, and sarcastically advised Judge Matthews that it was "evident the posse of Highland soldiers had been called out to prevent a lovers' tryst and satisfy the wounded vanity or jealousy of Captain Macpherson." The soldier glared at the lawyer, and the lawyer smiled and nodded at the audience, as if telling them a secret; and it really seemed possible for a minute or two that Harry might escape through the never-failing sympathy that lovers draw to themselves.

Unfortunately, at this moment a man entered with a shabby-looking little book, and Harry's face showed an unmistakable anxiety.

"What is the purport of this interruption?" asked DuBois as the volume was handed to him.

"This book fell from the prisoner's jacket last night and John VanBrunt, the jailor, picked it up. This morning he noticed that it had been freshly bound, and he ripped open the leather and found this letter between the boards."

The letter was eagerly examined, but it was in cipher and nothing could be made of it. One thing, however, instantly struck Judge Matthews; it was written on paper presumably only to be obtained in the Commander-in-Chief's quarters. This discov-

ery caused the greatest sensation, and Harry was angrily questioned as to how the letter got inside the binding of a book he was carrying.

"The book is one of my schoolbooks," said Harry. "I am a poor counter, and it is, as you see, a Ready Reckoner. I use its tables in my business calculations constantly; it was falling to pieces, and a friend offered to bind it afresh for me. As for the letter, I did not put it there. I do not know who put it there. I do not know a word of its meaning. It may be an old puzzle, put there for want of a better piece of paper. That is all I can tell."

"You can tell the name of the friend who rebound your book?"

"No, I cannot."

"Will not, you mean?"

"As you say."

A recess was taken at this point of the examination, and the Judges retired to consider what ought to be done. "The letter must, of course, be laid before General Clinton at once," said DuBois; "and as for the prisoner, there can now be no doubt of his treason. I am in favor of hanging him at sunset to-day."

"I think," answered Matthews, "we had better give the young man a day to tell us what he knows. This letter proves that there are worse traitors, and more powerful ones, behind him. It is our duty to at least try and reach them through their emissary."

"He will never tell."

"The shadow of the gallows is a great persuader. This cipher message is a most important affair. I

propose to make the sentence of death to-morrow at sunset, with the promise of life if he gives us the information we want."

Matthews carried his point, and Neil Semple arrived at the court house just as the sentence in accord with this opinion was pronounced. Harry hardly appeared to notice it; his gaze was fixed upon his father. The words had transfigured, not petrified him. His soul was at his eyes, and that fiery particle went through those on whom he looked and infected them with fear or with sympathy. He had risen to his feet when his son did, and every one looked at him, rather than at the prisoner. For mental, or spiritual, stature is as real a thing as physical; and in the day of trial this large-souled man, far from shrinking, appeared to grow more imposing. He had a look about him of a mountain among hills. The accepted son of a divine Father, he knew himself to be of celestial race, and he scorned the sentence of shameful death that had fallen from the lips of man upon his only son.

As he turned to the door he smiled bravely on Harry, and his smile was full of promise. He declined all help from both Medway and Semple, and was almost the first to leave the room. The crowd fell away from him as he passed; though he neither spoke nor moved his hands, it fell away as if he pushed it aside. Yet it was a pitiful, friendly crowd; not a man in it but would have gladly helped him to save his boy's life.

"What will he do?" asked Medway of his companion.

"I cannot tell," answered Semple. "He has some

purpose, for he walks like a man who knows what he intends and is in a hurry to perform it."

"This is a very bad case. I see not how, in any ordinary way, the young man can be saved. You are a lawyer, what think you?"

"Unless there are extraordinary ways of helping him; there are no ordinary ones. He is undoubtedly a rebel spy. Any court, either police or court-martial, would consider his life justifiably forfeit."

"Have you any influence, secret or open?"

"None whatever. If I had, we should not have been fined. Bradley may have, but I doubt it."

"I think he has. Men are not silent and observant year after year for nothing. But we must not trust to Bradley. Can I see Miss Semple at seven o'clock this evening? I know, madame your mother is averse to Englishmen, but in this case——"

"Miss Semple will certainly see you."

Then the young men parted and Neil returned to his home, for he did not dare to intrude his presence at that hour between the distressed father and daughter. It was hard enough to have Maria to meet; and the moment she heard his step she came weeping to him.

"Tell me, Uncle Neil," she cried, "what have they done to Harry? I am sick with suspense. Are they going to kill—to hang him?"

Her voice had sunk to a terrified whisper, and he looked pitifully at her and drew her within his embrace. "My dear Maria!" then his lips refused to say more, and he suffered his silence to confirm her worst fears. After a few moments he added:

"His only hope is in Lord Medway's influence. I think Medway may do something."

"Oh!" she sobbed "if he can only save his life! I would be content never to see him again! Only ask him to save his life. If Harry is killed I shall feel like a murderer as long as I live. I shall not dare to look at myself, no one will want to look at me. I shall die of grief and shame! Uncle, pity me! pity me!"

"My dear Maria, it is not your fault."

"It is, it is! He took his life in his hand just to see me."

"He was a selfish fool to do such a thing. See what misery he has made. It is his own fault and folly."

"Every one will despise me. I cannot bear it. People will say, 'She deserves it all. Why did she meet the young man unknown to her friends? See what she has done to her grandparents and her uncle.' People like Captain DeVries will frown at me and cross the street; and their wives and children will go into their houses when I come near and peep at me through the windows, and the mothers will say, 'Look at her! look at her! She brought a fine young man to the gallows, and her friends to shame and poverty.' Uncle, how am I to bear it?"

"I think, my poor child, Lord Medway has some plan. Money unbars all doors but heaven's, and Medway has plenty of money. Besides, General Clinton is easily moved by him. I do not think Clinton will refuse Medway anything; certainly not, if

Harry will tell who wrote the cipher message he was carrying."

"But Harry will not tell, will he?"

"I feel sure he will not."

"If he did, he would deserve to die. I would not shed a tear for him. As for Quentin Macpherson! —I wish that I was a man. I would cut his tongue out."

"Maria!"

"I would, truly. Then I would flog him to death."

Neil's dark face flushed crimson; his fingers twitched; he looked with approval and admiration at the passionate girl. One hundred years ago—in Scotland," he said, "I would have answered, 'Yes! He deserves it! I will do it for you!' "

"It is so wretched to be a woman! You can go out, see for yourself, hear for yourself; a girl can only suffer. Hour after hour, all night long, all day long, I have walked the floor in misery. How does Agnes bear it? She was cross, and sent me away this morning."

"She looks very ill; but she is calm, and not without hope. She has spoken to God and been comforted. Can you not do so?"

"No. I am not Agnes. I cannot pray. I want to *do* something. Oh, dear me! all this shame and sorrow because I had a little love-making with her brother and we did not tell the whole town about it. It is too great a punishment! It is not just nor kind. What wrong have I done? Yet how I have to suffer! No, I cannot pray, but if I can

do anything, see any one, be of any earthly help or use——"

"I think Medway has some scheme, if Clinton should fail, and that this scheme requires a woman's help."

"I hope it does! I hope it does! I will run any risk."

"Medway is coming here at seven o'clock. He wishes distinctly to see you. Run what risk you choose. I am not afraid of you. Nothing will make you forget you are Maria Semple."

"Thank you, Uncle Neil. Lord Medway and I have always been good friends. He will not ask me to do anything wrong; and if he did, I would not do it."

The prospect of his visit somewhat soothed Maria. Though Medway had never said a word of love to her, she knew she was adorable in his eyes as well as she knew the fact of her own existence. Women need no formal declarations; they have considered a lover's case and decided it many a time before he comes to actual confession. In her great trouble she hoped to find this love sufficient in some way for the alleviation of Harry's desperate position. But though she really was in the greatest sorrow, she was not oblivious to her beauty. She knew if she had a favor to ask, it was the best reason she had to offer. So, as the hour approached, she bathed her face and put on the *negligée* of scarlet silk, which was one of her most becoming house costumes. She thought her intentional, pleasing carelessness of dress would only be noticed in its effect; but Lord Medway was much in love,

and love is an occult teacher. He noticed at once the studied effort to make grief attractive—the glowing silk of her gown, the bronze slippers, the bewitching abandon of her dark, curling hair against the amber cushion of the chair on which she sat. And though he had an astonishing plan for Harry's life to propose, Maria's careful negligence gave him hope and courage. For if he had been quite indifferent to her, she would have been more indifferent to the dress she was to meet him in.

Nothing else in her surroundings spoke of love or happiness. The best parlor had been opened for his reception; but the few sticks of wood sobbed and sung wearily on the cold hearth, and the room was chill and half-lighted and full of shadows. He noticed, nothing, however, but the lovely girl who came to meet him as he entered it, and who, even in the gloom, showed signs of the violent grief which she soon ceased to restrain. For his tenderness loosed afresh all her complaining; and he encouraged her to open her heart, and to weep with that passionate abandon youth finds comfort in. But when she was weary and had sobbed herself into silence he said:

"Miss Semple—may I call you Maria?"

"Yes, if you will be my friend, if you will help me."

"I am your friend, and if there is help in man I will get it for you."

"I want Harry's life; he risked it for me. If they kill him, all my days I shall see that sight and feel that horror. I shall go mad, or die."

"Would you be content if I saved his life. He may be sent to prison."

"There is hope in that. I could bear it better."

"He will certainly be forbidden to come near New York, for——"

"Only let him live."

"He is without doubt a rebel."

"So am I, from this day forth."

"And a spy."

"I wish I could be one. There is nothing I would not tell."

He looked at her with the unreasoning adoration of a lover; then taking her cold hands between his own, he said in a slow, fervent voice:

"If you will promise to marry me, I will save the young man's life."

"You are taking advantage of my trouble."

"I know I am. A man who loves as I do must make all events go to further his love."

"But I love Harry Bradley."

"You think so. If you had met him under ordinary circumstances you would not have looked twice at him. It was the romance, the secrecy, the danger, the stolen minutes—all that kind of thing. There is no root in such love."

"I shall never cease to love Harry."

"I will teach you to forget him."

"No, no! How can you ask me in an hour like this? It is cruel."

"Love is cruel. Sooner or later love wounds; for love is selfish. I want you for my wife, Maria. I put aside so," and he swept his hand outward, "everything that comes in the way."

"You want to buy me! You say plainly, 'I will give you your lover's life for yourself.' I cannot listen to you!"

"Be sensible, Maria. This infatuation for a rebel spy is infatuation. There is nothing real to it. If the war were over, and you saw young Bradley helping his father in his shop and going about in ordinary clothes about ordinary business, you would wonder what possessed you ever to have fancied yourself in love with him."

"Oh, but you are mistaken!"

"You would say to yourself, 'I wish I had listened to Ernest Medway. He would have taken me all over the happy, beautiful world, to every lovely land, to every splendid court. He would have surrounded me with a love that no trouble could put aside; he would have given me all that wealth can buy; he would have loved me more and more until the very last moment of my life, and followed me beyond life with longings that would soon have brought us together again.' Yes, Maria, that is how I love you."

"Harry loves me."

"Not he! If he had loved you he would not, for his own pleasure, have run any risk of giving you this trouble. What did I say? Love is selfish, love wounds——"

"You wound me. You are selfish."

"I am. I love you. You seemed to belong to me that first hour I saw you. I will not give you up."

"If you really loved me, if you were really noble, you would save Harry without any conditions."

"Perhaps. I am not really noble. I can't trust such fine sentiments. They will lead, I know not where, only away from you. I tell you plainly, I will save the young fellow's life, if it be possible, on condition that you promise to marry me."

"I am not eighteen years old yet."

"I will wait any reasonable time."

"Till the end of the war?"

"Yes, provided it is over when you are twenty-one."

She pondered this answer, looking up covertly a moment at the handsome, determined face watching her. Three years held innumerable possibilities. It was a period very far away. Lord Medway might have ceased to love her before it was over; he might have fallen in love with some other girl. He might die; she might die; the wide Atlantic ocean might be between them. The chances were many in her favor. She remained silent, considering them, and Medway watched with a curious devotion the expressions flitting across her face.

"Think well, Maria," he said at last, letting her hands drop gently from his own. "Remember that I shall hold you to every letter of your promise. Do not try to make yourself believe that if Bradley escapes and you come weeping and entreating to me I shall give way. *I shall not.* I want to be very plain with you. I insist that you understand, Harry Bradley is to be given up finally and forever. He is to have no more to do with your life. I am planning for *our* future; I do not think of him at all. When he leaves New York to-morrow he must be to you as if he had never been."

"Suppose I do not promise to marry you, what then?"

"Nothing. I shall go away till you want me, and send for me."

"Oh!"

"Yes."

"And not even try to save Harry's life? Not even try?"

"Why should I? Better men than Harry Bradley have died in the same cause."

She rose and walked across the room a few times, and then, being cold, came back to the fire, knelt on the rug and warmed her hands. He watched her intently, but did not speak. She was trying to find something which should atone to her better self for such a contract. It came with the thought of Harry's father and Agnes. For their sakes, she ought to do all she could. Harry, for her sake, had taken his life in his hand and forfeited it; surely, then, it was right that she, having the power to do so, should redeem it. Better that he should live for others than die for her. Better that she should lose him in the living world than in the silent grave. Through Agnes she would hear of his comings and goings, his prosperity, and his happiness; but there would come no word to her from the dead whether at all he lived and loved, or not. With a quick, decisive motion she rose and looked at the man who was waiting in such motionless, but eager, silence.

"A life for a life!" she said simply, offering Medway her hand.

"You mean that you will be my wife?"

"Yes. I will marry you when the war is over."

"Or when you are twenty-one, even if it be not over?"

"Yes."

"Now, then," he said, "you are my betrothed;" and he drew her within his arm. "My honor, my hopes, my happiness, are in your hands."

"They are safe. Though I am only a girl, I know what my promise means. I shall keep it."

"I believe you. And you will love me? You will learn to love me, Maria?"

"I will do my best to make you happy, you ought not to ask more."

"Very well." He looked at her with a new and delightful interest. She was his own, her promise had been given. He could, indeed, tell by her eyes, —languid, but obstinately masterful—that she would not be easily won, but he did not dislike that; he would conquer her by the strength of his own love; he would make her understand what love really meant. Still, he felt that for the present it would be better to go away; so he said:

"You shall hear from me as soon as possible. Try and sleep, my dear one. You may tell yourself, 'Ernest is doing all that can be done.' Then he took her hands and kissed them, and in a moment she was alone. Her heart was heavy as lead, and she was cold and trembling, but she was no longer in the shadow of Death. Medway's face, turned to her in the semi-darkness of the open door, was full of hope; and there was an atmosphere of power about the man which assured her of success; but she truly felt at that hour as if it was bought with her life. She was in the dungeon of despair;

there seemed nothing to hope for, nothing to desire, in all the to-morrows of the years before her. "And I may have sixty years to live," she moaned; for youth exaggerates every feeling, and would be grieved to believe that its sorrows were not immortal.

She pushed the dying fire safely together, looked mournfully round the darksome room, closed and locked the door. Then Neil came toward her and asked if Lord Medway could do anything, and she answered, "He can save Harry's life; he has promised that. I suppose he will be imprisoned, but his life is saved. What did grandmother say about Lord Medway being here?"

"She has never been down stairs. She does not know he was here."

"Then we will not tell her. What is the use?"

"None at all. Father and mother have their own trouble. They are very anxious and almost broken-hearted at the indignity put upon our family. I heard my father crying as I passed his door and mother trying to comfort him, but crying, too. It made my heart stand still."

"It is my fault! It is my fault! Oh! what a wicked, miserable girl I am! What can I do? What can I do?"

"Try and sleep, and get a little strength for to-morrow. Within the next twenty-four hours Harry Bradley will be saved or dead."

"I think he is saved. I am sure of it."

"Then try and sleep; will you try, Maria?"

"Yes."

She said the word with a hopeless indifference,

half nullifying the promise. Then, lighting her candle, she went slowly to her room. Oh, but the joy that is dead weighs heavy! Maria could hardly trail her body upstairs. Her life felt haggard and thin, as if it was in its eleventh hour; and she was too physically exhausted to stretch out her hand into the dark and find the clasp of that Unseen Hand always waiting the hour of need, strong to uphold, and ready to comfort. No, she could not pray; she had lost Harry; there was nothing else she desired. In her room there was a picture of the crucifixion, and she cast her eyes up to the Christ hanging there, forsaken in the dark, and wondered if He pitied her, but the pang of unpermitted prayer made her dumb in her lonely grief.

> Alas, God Christ! along the weary lands,
> What lone, invisible Calvaries are set!
> What drooping brows with dews of anguish wet,
> What faint outspreading of unwilling hands
> Bound to a viewless cross, with viewless bands.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HELP OF JACOB COHEN.

On leaving Maria, Lord Medway went straight to his friend General Clinton. He had just dined, and having taken much wine, was bland and good-tempered. Medway's entrance delighted him. "I have had my orderly riding about for a couple of hours looking for you," he said. "Where have you been Ernest? My dinner wanted flavor without you."

"I have been seeing some people about this son of Bradley's that the Police Court has in its clutches. By-the-bye, why don't you put a stop to its infamous blackmailing? As a court, it is only a part of Howe's treachery, formed for the very purpose of extortion, and of bringing His Majesty's Government into disrepute. Abolish the whole affair, Henry. You are court sufficient, in a city under martial law."

"All you say is true, Ernest, and there is no doubt that Matthews and Du Bois and the rest of them are the worst of oppressors. But I am expected to subjugate the whole South this winter, and I must leave New York in three or four weeks now."

"The Government expects miracles of you,

Henry; but if military miracles are possible, you are the soldier to work them. I have found out to-day why you are not more popular; it is this Police Court, and they call it a *Military* Police Court, I believe; and all its tyrannies are laid to you because your predecessor instituted it. They might as well lay Howe's love for rebels to you."

"Speaking of rebels, I hear most suspicious things of Bradley's son. In fact, he is a spy. Matthews tells me that he ought to have been hung to-day. There is something unusual about the affair and I wanted to talk to you concerning it. Bradley himself has been here and said things that have made me uncomfortable—you know how he brings the next world into this one; Smith has been here, also, asking me to pardon the fellow, because the feeling in the city about Tryon's doings in Connecticut is yet like smoldering fire in the hearts of the burghers. Powell has been here asking me to pardon, because the spy's father has a thousand bridles to make for the troops going South, and he thinks hanging the youth would kill his father, or at least incapacitate him for work, and Rivington has just left, vowing he will not answer for consequences if his newspaper does not sympathize with the Bradleys. If Bradley's son had been the arch-rebel's son, there could hardly have been more petitions for his life. I don't understand the case. What do you say?"

"That Matthews and Du Bois have made a tremendous blunder in fining the Semples for disloyalty in the matter. I will warrant the Semples' loyalty with my own."

"So would I. It is indisputable."

"Yet the Elder has been fined two hundred pounds, and Mr. Neil Semple one hundred pounds, because Bradley's son tied his boat at their landing; a fact they were as ignorant of as you or I. And you get the blame and ill-will of such tyranny, Henry. It is shameful!"

"It is," answered Clinton in a tone of self-pity; "the boat, however, was full of goods, about which the young man would say nothing at all."

"Women's bits of lace and ribbons; a mended fan, and some gloves and stockings."

"There was also a Bradley saddle."

"Yes, Bradley acknowledged it."

"Then father or son ought to have given information about it."

"It was their business; and if either you or I were brought before such an irresponsible court and such autocratic judges, I dare say we should consider silence our most practical weapon of defense. In Harry Bradley's position, I should have acted precisely as he did. The whole affair resolves itself into a lovers' tryst; the lad would not give the lady a disagreeable publicity; he would die first. You yourself would shield any good woman with your life, Henry, you know you would."

And Clinton thought of the bewitching Mrs. Badely and the lovely Miss Blundell, and answered with an amazing air of chivalry, "Indeed I would!"

"Have you ever noticed a Captain Macpherson, belonging to your own Highland regiment?"

"Who could help noticing him? He is always the most prominent figure in every room."

"He will be so no longer. He was almost hissed out of court to-day, and I was told the demonstrations on the street sent him stamping and swearing to his quarters. Well, he is the villain of this pitiful little drama. The horoine is that lovely granddaughter of Semples."

"I know her; a little darling! and as good as she is beautiful."

Then Medway, with an inimitable scornful mimicry told the story of the pebble and the note, the alarm of the Highland troops, the arrest of the Elder and his son, the subsequent proceedings in court, the sympathy of the people with the Semples, and the contempt which no one tried to conceal for the informer. Then, changing his voice and attitude, he described Bradley's speechless grief, the Semple's wounded loyalty and indignation, and finally the passionate sorrow of the mistress and sister of the doomed man.

"It is the most pitiful story of the age," he continued, "and if I were you, Henry, I would not permit civilians to usurp the power you ought to hold in your own hand. You have to bear the blame of all the crimes committed by this infamous court. Pardon the prisoner with a stroke of your pen, if only to put these fellows in their proper place."

"But there was a cipher message in his possession —here it is. It was in the binding of a book he carried in his pocket."

"He says he did not put it there. No one can read it. If you found a letter in the Babylonish speech, would you hang a man because you could not read the message he carried!"

"Special pleading, Ernest. And he ought to have told who rebound the book, and to whom he was carrying it. The paper on which the cipher is written is my paper. Some one, not far from me, must have taken it."

"Suppose you question Smith?"

"Do you intend to say that Smith is a traitor?"

"I say, ask Smith. I have no doubt he can read the Babylonish for you—if he will."

"You alarm me. Am I surrounded by enemies?"

"I think you have many round you. I have warned you often. My advice to you at this time is to pardon young Bradley."

"Why are you taking such an interest in young Bradley?"

"I have no secrets from you, he is my rival."

"Preposterous! How could he rival you in anything?"

"Yet he is my rival in the affections of Maria Semple."

"Then let him hang! He will be out of your way."

"No, he would be forever in my way. She would idolize him, make him a hero and a saint, and worship him in some secret shrine of memory as long as she lives. I am going to marry her, and I want no secret shrines. He is a very good-looking, ordinary young man; only the circumstances of the time lifted him out of the average and the commonplace. Let him go scot free that he may find his level which is far below the horizon of my peerless Maria."

"I don't think I can let him go 'scot free,' Ernest. I should offend many if I did, and it would be made

a precedent; suppose I imprison him during the continuance of the war!"

"That is too romantic. Maria would haunt the prison and contrive some way of communication. He would still be her hero and her lover."

"And you will marry this infatuated girl?"

"Yes, a thousand times, yes! Her love for that boy is mere sentiment. I will teach her what love really means. She has promised to marry me—if I save Harry Bradley's life."

"I never saw you taken so with any woman before."

"I never cared for a woman before. The moment I saw Maria Semple it was different. I knew that she belonged to me. Henry, you are my best friend, give me my wife; no one but you can do so."

"Ernest! Ernest! You ask a great thing."

"Not too great for you to grant. You have the will and you have the power. Are you not going to make me happy, Henry?"

"Privately, it would be a delight to humor you, Ernest; but officially, what am I to say to Matthews, Du Bois and others."

"Tell them, that as a matter of military policy, you wish the prisoner released. Why should you make explanations to them? Oh, they are such courtiers, they will smile and do all you wish? You are above their rascally court; reverse their decision in this affair and show them your power. Believe me, it will be, politically, a wise step."

There was silence for a few moments, and then Clinton said: "I am sorry for the Semples. I like them both, and there is something about the saddler

that sets him above other men. But it would not be right to let this young spy—for he is a spy—off, without some punishment."

"I think that is right."

"He must be told that he will be shot on sight if he enters New York again."

"He will deserve it."

"And I will have him drummed out of the city as a rogue and a suspect. We will make no hero of him—quite the contrary."

"I oppose nothing of that kind. I ask for his life and his freedom, because he stands between Maria Semple and myself. If I wanted any other reason, because I thoroughly respect his father, and am on excellent terms with his sister, who has been very hospitable to me and who is a remarkable girl. It has troubled me to-day to remember her lonely sorrow and anxiety."

"You have given me three good reasons for granting your request, and have omitted the strongest of all, Ernest."

"What is that, Henry?"

"That I love you."

"And I love you. You have always been like a big brother to me; always petted me and humored my desires."

"Well, then, I will see Matthews and Du Bois in the morning."

"Send for them here to-night. If their court is a Military Police Court, you are Commander-in-Chief."

"Right! I will send for them. It is only about nine o'clock."

"And you will insist that the prisoner be given his life and freedom—nothing less?"

"I give you my word for it. But I will have him punished as I said. He must be prevented from coming to New York again. This kind of thing can not happen twice."

"I know. If words could thank you, Henry, I would say them."

"Nonsense, Ernest; what are words between us? We know each other's heart;" then he laid his arm across his friend's shoulder and their hands clasped; there was no need of words.

Very early in the morning Maria and Agnes received the good tidings. Maria was asleep when Medway's letter, with a basket of hot-house fruit was brought to her. Agnes was making her father's coffee, and they both looked at the unexpected letter with a fearful anticipation. But as soon as Agnes glanced at it, she perceived that it brought good news, and she gave it to her father. She could not speak, and for a few minutes Bradley was equally silent. Not that they were ungrateful, oh, no! They were only inarticulate. They had a gratitude so deep and holy that they had no words with which to express it; and when the happy father found speech, it was weak and tremulous as that of a man in the last extremity. *"I was brought low, and He helped me!"* That was all, but he stood up, steadying himself by his chair, and uttered the verse with a reverence and holy joy that no language can describe.

In a little while he began to talk to his daughter. "I knew God would not fail me," he said. "Yester-

day afternoon I did all I could, and then I left the rest with Him. I saw General Clinton and said a few words which he could not gainsay. I saw Smith, and told him plainly if Harry died, he should translate that cypher message to the Commander-in-Chief. I saw Powell, and many others, whom *I hold at my mercy,* and they know *that* now, if they never knew it before. Andrews left New York an hour after I saw him; he is a fearful creature and he believed I would speak, though Harry had been silent; well, I must see the boy as soon as possible, there is certain to be some difficulty that only gold can overcome. I hope they will not imprison him."

"Lord Medway says, he will be set free."

"Thank God!"

He rose with the words and Agnes brought him his top-coat. Then, as they stood face to face, she was shocked at the ravage thirty hours of travail in the shadow of death had made on him. "Father," she said, "oh, father, forgive me! I did wrong to deceive you! I did wrong!"

"Yes, my girl, you did wrong; and nothing right can come from wrong; but Agnes, I have been worse than you. I, also, have been living a deceitful life, thinking that the end justified the means. I set you the example. Your fault is my fault. We have both been trying to do the right thing in *our own way.* We have been patriots, as Nicodemus was a Christian—by night. That is wrong. We must do right first hand, not second hand. From this hour that kind of thing will be sinning with our eyes open; it will be looking God's Commandments

in the face, and then breaking them. Do you understand, Agnes?"

Then he went away, and Agnes tried to turn to her household duties. She wondered if Maria would come and see her or if she ought to go to Maria, and while she was debating the question Neil called. He was much depressed. The good news about Harry only affected him through Agnes, and he was very anxious about his father, who was in a high fever and was constantly talking of his fine and his inability to pay it. "Maybe I'll hae to go to prison for the debt," was his constant cry, and Neil felt that his father's fine must be satisfied, no matter at what cost. So it was a troubled little visit; the day before each was so uncertain, so full of probabilities which the slightest momentum might divert to either joy or sorrow. They could not feel that their congratulations were full ripe; something might yet happen to destroy their hopes.

Neil went first to his office. He found Mr. Curtis preparing for the court, and as yet unaware of the decision in Harry's case; "but it is a great piece of good luck for the young scamp," he said, when Neil told him, "for he's a spy, if ever there was one. I have no doubt he deserves death, fifty times over."

"I have no doubt there are fifty men in New York who deserve it more than he does—men of power and prominence."

"I would keep such observations to myself, Neil. Your father is far too outspoken and he is paying for it now."

"I hope my father will never be less outspoken."

"Well, as I say, he has to pay for his opinions.

He has two hundred pounds to pay, but then he had his two hundred pounds worth of fault-finding."

"What do you mean, Curtis?"

"Don't you remember how imprudently he spoke about Mr. Hulen's imprisonment?"

"He said nothing but the truth. Mr. Hulens is the most loyal of gentlemen, but because he was not sufficiently polite to a town major, he was imprisoned with felons and vagabonds and afterward compelled to publicly apologize. It was an infamous wrong."

"Precisely what the Elder said. It has not been forgotten."

"There were the two De Lanceys——"

"Yes, to be sure! And why did he trouble himself about them? There are enough of De Lanceys to look after De Lanceys."

"The injustice of the affair was every man's business. These two De Lanceys were private gentlemen, who, because they had some words with a German chasseur, were seized in their homes and tried by court-martial—though they had no connection whatever with the army: at the worst it was a simple assault, the most trifling offense the civil law notices, yet the De Lanceys were degraded and imprisoned for two months, and then compelled to beg this German mercenary's pardon before all the troops at Kingsbridge. Remember Mr. Hicks, turned out of his hotel by General Patterson at the request of that unmentionable creature Loring—because Loring wanted it for one of his parasites. Remember poor Amberman, the miller at Hempstead, who, because he asked Major Stockton for payment

for the flour he had bought, was nearly flogged to death, and then run through with Major Crew's sword, and kicked out of the way—dead. Nothing was done to Stockton; I met him on the street an hour ago, still an officer in His Majesty's service. I could add one hundred examples to these—but what is the use? And why are we lawyers? There is no law. The will of any military officer is the law."

"Still we are lawyers, Neil; and special counselors to three of the commissaries."

"I shall not be counselor much longer. I am going to write my resignation now."

"Are you mad? These fees are about all the ready money we make."

"I should deserve to be called mad, or worse, if I continued to serve a government which had just fined me for not being careful of its interests."

"For Heaven's sake, don't throw hundreds a year away for a figment!"

"Honor is something more than a figment. But you had better go to court early this morning. When you come back, I want you to let me have two hundred pounds until I can sell some property."

Curtis burst into a loud laugh: "I could not let you have two hundred shillings," he said. "Good gracious, Neil, how can you suppose I have money to spare?"

"I know you have money, but if you are averse to lending it, that is a different thing. I thought you might have some memory of all I have done for you."

"I have. Of course I have. You have put thou-

sands of pounds in my way; I don't deny or forget it, but I have a family——"

"I understand. I wish you would hasten about Bradley's case. His father will be expected to pay for their service."

"I suppose his case is settled. I am sorry he has got off—deuced sorry! a saucy youth who looked defiance at his betters all the time."

"Were they his betters?"

"He ought to be hung!" and he went on talking rapidly about Bradley's deserts. Neil knew the bluster was affected in order to prevent recurrence to the subject of money, and with a heart hot and wounded he sat down to write his resignation of the offices which were his principal support. Curtis was disconcerted and uneasy, and his last words on leaving the office were an entreaty to Neil to do "nothing foolish and hasty." But the papers were written, and then he took himself to the proper departments.

He was woefully unhappy. His father's and mother's condition made his strong heart tremble, and though no one could have supposed from his appearance that he had a single care, the sudden falling away of his friends and acquaintances wounded him like a sword.

As he walked the streets, so gravely erect, so haughtily apart, he was made to feel, in many ways, that he had lost in public estimation. No one took the trouble to ask him a favor or stopped to seek his opinion, or told him bits of gossip about events transpiring. He was classed with the Bradleys. The

Misses Robertson passed him with the most formal of recognitions; Miss Smith did not notice him at all, while Joris Van Emerslie, who had taken his advice the previous week about the sale of his business, crossed the street to avoid him.

Friends were not far behind enemies. As he stood a moment on the steps of the barracks commissary, Judge Lawson, an old man and an intimate acquaintance of the Semples, stopped and said, "Good-morning, Neil. I am glad to see you here. I heard Cornelius Bloch had asked for your position and was likely to get it."

"I did not resign my position, Judge, until five minutes ago. The commissioners have not yet received it."

"Very true, but every one knew you must resign —the servants of the King must be above suspicion, eh?"

"Suspicion, sir!"

"Now, now, Neil! You must keep your temper for younger men; I am too old to be bluffed."

Then Neil walked silently away, and the old friend of the family watched him with a queer mingling of pity and satisfaction. "Proud creatures, them Semples, old and young," he muttered; "but good, true hearts in them, I'm half sorry for Neil, he was always ready to do me a kindness; but a little pull-down won't hurt him, he carries his head too high for anything."

But high as Neil carried his head, his heart was in the depths. It seemed to him that all the fair, honorable life he had builded was falling into ruin. He needed now both help and sympathy, and his

friends looked coldly upon him, or took the same reproving tone as the self-righteous comforters of the man of Uz. Full of bitter thoughts he was walking down Queen Street, when he heard a soft, familiar voice, almost at his ear, say, "Mr. Semple! Honored sir, will you speak to me for a few minutes?" He looked up quickly, and saw that he was close to the doorstep of Jacob Cohen, the Jewish dealer in fine furniture, china, jewelry, etc.

"Certainly, Mr. Cohen," he answered, as he stepped inside the gloomy warehouse, crowded with articles of great beauty and astonishing value.

"Will you sit here, if you please, sir," and Cohen drew a large stool forward for Neil; "I must not detain you, your time is worth much money, many people wish to buy it, but it is land I would buy, if you will sell it to me."

"Land, Mr. Cohen! Perhaps a house——"

"No, it is the land you own next to our synagogue. If you will remember, I had it in my heart to buy this plot of ground six years ago. I thought then we could build a larger temple, one more worthy for our worship; but we did not reach agreement at that time and then came the war. I offered you then, four hundred pounds for the land; to-day I make you the same offer if you will take it.

Neil's emotion was almost beyond his control. For a few minutes he could not answer the proposition; but Cohen had the patience of the Jew, and he divined the young man's agitation and mental tremor. Silent and motionless he waited for Neil's reply. It came strained and hesitating, as if speech was an effort.

"Mr. Cohen—I will sell you the land—yes, indeed! as you say, for four hundred pounds."

"To-morrow? Can the sale be completed to-morrow?"

"I will prepare the papers to-day."

"I am well pleased."

"Mr. Cohen, this is a great surprise—a good surprise—you do not understand how good. I believe it is something more than business you intend; it is sympathy, kindness, friendship."

"It is business, but it is kindness also, if you will accept it. Your house have ever done me good, and not evil. I and mine prayed for you—yes, the Jew knows the pang of injustice that must be borne without protest and without redress."

"You have done my family and myself an unspeakable kindness. I were the worst of ingrates not to acknowledge it," and Neil rose and offered his hand. And when Cohen took it, and held it for a few moments within his own, a marvellous change passed over the old man. The timid attitude, the almost servile respect, vanished; his face beamed with a lofty expression, his eyes met Neil's frankly; in the prosaic surroundings of the dark, crowded shop he looked, for a few moments, like an Eastern prince.

As they stood thus together, Neil longing to say something that should show his deep gratitude and friendship, and forgetting that Israel in America at that day still preserved much of their Oriental seclusion in household matters, asked after his daughter, Mrs. Belasco. "I have not seen her since her marriage," he said; "but I can never forget her.

It was her promptitude in the duel between Captain Hyde and myself that saved my life."

"She has a good heart;" then suddenly, "come, come into my home, yes, come in and see her."

He walked toward the back of the shop and Neil followed him into a large, low room, where there was a table covered with a white cloth. Another white cloth, folded lengthwise, shielded the bread and the china laid ready for the noonday meal. Cohen stood at the entrance and permitted Neil to pass in. As he did so, a small, dark Jew rose and bringing forward a chair, said, "Welcome be the guest."

"This is Mr. Belasco," said Cohen, and then Neil knew the woman who was standing behind Mr. Belasco's chair. It was the still beautiful Miriam. The happiness of perfect love lighted the dusky white of her complexion and filled her glorious eyes. A brilliant silk kerchief was thrown over her black hair, and she wore a rich, flowing garment of many colors. There were gems in her ears and around her neck, and her slim, brown fingers sparkled with sapphires and diamonds. Behind her was the white-washed wall of a room on which was traced some black Hebrew characters—wise or comforting passages from the Psalms or the Prophets; and on shelves of ordinary wood, a quantity of beautiful china, some silver vessels, and a copper lamp with seven beaks, brightly polished. Before her sat Belasco, his swarthy face revealing both power and intellect, purposely veiled beneath a manner of almost obsequious deference. But his voice, like Cohen's, was full of those vague tones of softness and melody,

of which Orientals preserve the eternal poetry, with the eternal secret. Outside, but within sight and hearing, was the vibrant, noisy, military life of New York—western turmoil—hurry of business—existence without pause; but here, in this grave, unornamented room, with its domestic simplicity and biblical air, was the very atmosphere of the East.

Neil, who really possessed the heart and the imagination of a poet, felt the vibration of the far-off life, and even while addressing Mr. Belasco, had visions of palm-trees and of deserts and of long, long journeys with the caravans of camels, from oasis to oasis. He was standing amid the children of the patriarchs. These souls were of older race than himself; they had the noblest of kindreds, a country that was the mother of nations.

With the ideal respect born of such thoughts he offered his hand to Mrs. Belasco. Then she called her children and proudly exhibited them to Neil, and in a few moments a slave brought in a dish of lamb stewed with rice and herbs, some dates, a plate of little cakes strewed with caraway seeds, and some strong coffee. A roll of bread was at each plate, and Cohen broke his with Neil. Miriam did not eat with them; she waited silently on their wants, her face beaming with pleasure and goodwill. And Neil felt as if he had suddenly passed through a little wooden door into the life of the far East.

He said something like this, and Cohen answered, "God has said to us, as to His servant Abraham, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred. We are the wayfarers of the Eternal, confessing

still, as Moses in the Law taught us—'a Syrian ready to perish was my father.' " Deut. 26:5.

It was an unlooked-for and wonderful hour, and Neil left the shop of Jacob Cohen a very different being from the depressed, anxious man who had entered it an hour previously. His first thought was his father and mother, and he went to his office, wrote the following note, and sent a messenger with it to them:

MY HONORED AND BELOVED PARENTS:

I have sold a plot of land in Mill Street for four hundred pounds, and the fines will be paid to-morrow. We shall not require to borrow a farthing from any one. Be at ease. I will come to you as soon as I have written the necessary transfer papers.

Your affectionate son,

NEIL.

Then an unconquerable desire to see Agnes, or at least to do something for her, took entire possession of him; and he laid aside his business, and went as rapidly as possible to the Bradley house. But Agnes would not see him. She asked to be left alone, and Neil understood her need of solitude, and respected it. In Maiden Lane he met Lord Medway, who said, "I have been at your office seeking you, Mr. Semple. Young Bradley is to be put outside the city at two o'clock to-day."

"He is pardoned then, on what conditions?"

"He will be shot on sight if he comes within five miles of New York; and I fear he will not have a pleasant escort to the barricade."

"You mean that he will be drummed out by the military and assaulted by the mob?"

"Yes, the court said, as a vagabond and spy and common rogue against His Majesty's government and interests."

"Oh! I suppose the court is right; there is nothing to be done."

"His father has sent a number of men with some message to all the respectable burghers he can influence; and I think Bradley can influence a great many, either through their fear of him, or their respect for him."

"What does he propose to do? He can not prevent this public demonstration, and he ought not to try to do so. His son has got off miraculously well. It is his place to submit and be grateful."

"He tells me the last man drummed out of town was nearly killed by the missiles thrown at him, and did lose the sight of one eye. He proposes to prevent the mob's playfulness, if he can."

"But how?"

"He has asked a number of the tradesmen and merchants in the city to send their apprentices and clerks, and thus, by influence and example, keep the unruly element in check. No one can prevent their presence. In fact, good citizens are expected to countenance the rogue's punishment. I may show myself at some point of the route," he added, with a laugh; "I have a little friend who may ask me about it," and he looked curiously at Neil, wondering if Maria had told him how the miracle had been performed which saved Harry's life.

But Neil made no sign, and Medway continued:

"I wish you would dine with me this evening, Mr. Semple. I have something of importance to tell you. I dine at five, shall we say at The King's Arms. Afterward I will walk home with you, if I may."

"I will join you at five o'clock. What time does the young man begin his march, and from what point?"

"From Whitehall Slip to Dock Street, Hanover Square, Queen Street, Crown Street, William Street, King George Street to the Boston Road, and so to the eastern gate of the barrier. I rather think the companions of the journey will be few in number ere they reach the barrier. They start about two o'clock I believe. You will not forget dinner at five?"

Then the young men parted and Neil went to his office to consider his movements. Events had happened with a celerity that made him nervous and uncertain. He was used to method and plenty of time. Hurry, under any circumstances, destroyed his balance. Between his father and mother, Agnes, Maria, John Bradley and his son, Jacob Cohen and Lord Medway, he felt as if in a whirlwind. He wanted an hour of solitude in which to collect himself. But his office, that usually quiet, methodical place, was this day full of unrest. His partner was fuming at Harry Bradley's release, and wondering "what on earth was the use of the law, or the necessity for lawyers to interpret it?"

"There is now no necessity for either law or lawyers," answered Neil; "we may pack our books and lock our door."

"Neil, I have been thinking how I could manage to get two hundred for you."

"It is not necessary. I am sorry I spoke to you on the subject."

"I hope you have reconsidered the question of resignation."

"I sent in my resignation this morning."

"Of course the commissioners will include me with you."

"Not necessarily."

"Yes, necessarily; and I think you have been very selfish and unkind."

"My honor."

"My wife and children! They are of as much account as your honor."

Then Neil rose and went out again; there seemed no peace anywhere, he had scarcely reached the street when he heard in the distance the mocking strains of the drums and the fifes. They sounded so intolerable that he fled to his home to escape their cruel clamor. His mother saw his approach and was at the door to meet him. Her face looked strangely grey and thin, but it had something too of its old spirit and cheerfulness as she said:

"Neil, my dear lad, your letter set our old hearts singing. How did you manage it? Who helped you?"

"God and Jacob Cohen helped me," he answered. "The Jew has bought my land in Mill Street, and the strange thing is that he bought it out of respect and sympathy for my father. I am as sure of that as I am that Jacob Cohen is the only Christian in New York who remembered us for past kindness or cared

for us in present trouble. I want to rest an hour, mother; I have an appointment with Lord Medway at five o'clock, and I feel like a leaf that has been blown hither and thither by the wind for two days. You might tell Maria that Agnes Bradley's brother will be outside of New York, a free man, in an hour."

"I am glad he is out o' our life, anyway. Much sorrow and loss he has brought us, and you will see that Maria's good name will be none the better for being mixed up with the affair."

"That is Macpherson's fault. For her sake, and for your sake, he might have held his tongue. I will not forgive him."

"His duty, Neil——"

"Nonsense! He could have given the information without bringing in Maria's name. He was mad with wounded vanity, it was a miserable, cowardly bit of revenge."

"I don't think he is a coward."

"He is; any man is a coward who takes his spite out on a woman, and you have been so kind, so motherly to him. He is a disgrace to the tartan: but I want an hour's rest, and tell father to be perfectly easy about the money. I shall have it in the morning. It rests on Cohen's word; I know no better human security."

"Are you not hungry?"

"I had dinner with the Cohens, a simple, excellent meal."

"The world is tapsalterie; I wonder at nothing that happens. Did you see the young man? I mean Bradley's son?"

"Not I. I did not want to see him. I heard the drums and got out of sight and hearing as quickly as possible. I believe his father has managed the affair very wisely; I should not wonder if the rogue's march turns out more of a triumph than an ignominy."

In a measure Neil's judgment proved to be correct. Respectable young men, charged to discountenance riotous abuse, began to join the procession at its outset, and this element was continually augmented. As they passed Bradley's shop, Bradley himself stepped out of it and walking at the head of the line, took his place at Harry's right hand. No one interfered. The drummers and fifers in front did not see him, and the stupid Waldeckers, ignorant of English and of everything but the routine of their regiment, took him as a part of the event. He was dressed in black cloth, with a white lawn band around his neck, and if they speculated about him at all, they thought he was a clergyman, and concluded the prisoner was to be hung at the barrier.

But Harry turned to his father a face full of love and gratitude. The youth's self-control was complete, for his disdain of the whole proceeding was both breastplate and weapon to him. He was bareheaded and with the wind in his hair and the sunlight in his eyes he went swinging onward to the song of victory he heard in his own heart. By the side of his father's massive contour and stern countenance, Harry looked like some young Michael, bright-faced and fearless.

Now and then a taunt was hurled at the lad, and occasionally a jibe far more tangible, but of neither

THE DRUMMERS AND FIFERS IN FRONT DID NOT SEE HIM.

missile did he show the least consciousness. The presence of his father touched the rudest heart. He removed his hat when he saw his son's uncovered head, and his grey hairs evoked far more pity than contempt. When they passed through the fashionable residence streets, the sympathy was even remarkable; windows were thrown up, handkerchiefs fluttered, and now and then a shrill little *"bravo!"* made Harry look up and catch the influences of pity and admiration that women, young and lovely, and women, old and wayworn, rained down on him. As Medway predicted, the crowd melted away long before the barrier was reached, for the mood of mischief was not in it. The fifes screamed and the drums beat, but could not summon the devilish spirit of mob violence, and Harry Bradley's tramp to the Rogue's March was a much more quiet and orderly affair than the Police Court intended it to be.

At the barrier the gate was flung open, and, in the midst of a fanfaronade of discordant sounds and scornful shouts Harry was hustled outside. But his father had found opportunity to give him gold and to tell him a negro was waiting with a swift horse behind the gates; and just at the last moment, amid the scoffing and jeering of the soldiers, he put his arms about his son's neck and kissed and blessed him. He had drunk the shameful cup to the dregs with the lad, and he turned to the little gathering a face that awed them. As one man they moved aside to let him pass, and for a few moments watched him, as, with a mighty stride he took the road homeward. For he looked beyond his nature large and commanding, and he walked as if moved

by some interior force that was beyond his control. Men gazed at him with awe and pity, but no one ventured to speak to him.

As he approached his home the inner momentum that had carried him without let or hinderance at a marvelous speed seemed to fail; he faltered, looked round wearily, and then stumbled forward, as if he had charged his spirit for the last mile of life. When he reached his gate he could not open it, and Agnes ran out to help him; speech was impossible, but with a pitiful glance he let her lead him into the house. Leaning on her, he stumbled forward until he reached the sofa, then, with a great cry he fell backward.

Fortunately, Neil Semple at that moment entered the house, and he was instantly at Bradley's side, rendering, with Agnes, the help at once necessary, and soothing the afflicted man with words of such sympathy and affection as few mortals had ever heard pass the lips of Neil Semple. "Mr. Bradley," he entreated, "do not fail yourself at this hour! We are all so sorry for you—all ready to weep with you —think of Agnes—are you suffering?—Shall I go for a physician? What is the matter? Speak to me, Mr. Bradley."

"Sir," he answered, stretching out his trembling arms, "sir, I can neither see nor hear."

CHAPTER IX.

THE TURN OF THE TIDE.

EVERY misfortune has its horizon, but as yet Maria was not able to lift up her eyes and see any comfort coming from afar. It seemed to her that all the joy and glory of living was over. It was not only that Harry was taken out of her schemes of happiness for the future; the present, also, was denuded of every hope and clouded by very real annoyances. She felt bitterly the publicity given to her name, and she knew that this publicity would supply those who disliked her with continual opportunities for her humiliation.

"I shall have to stop at home," she thought; "and grandmother is sick and grandfather fretful, and Neil's whole care is given to Agnes Bradley. I think he might consider me a little; but nobody does; I am only Maria. Yet my life is ruined, quite ruined;" and the unhappy child wept over herself and wondered how she was to live through the long, long years before her.

Very frequently, however, this tearful mood gave place to indignation against her friends in general, and Agnes in particular. For she still held steadily to the opinion that all the trouble had arisen from her selfishness and inability to remember any one's

desires but her own. And so, in plaintive or passionate wandering from one wrong to another, she passed some very miserable days. Finally, Neil persuaded her to go and see Agnes. He said, "Even the walk may do you good; and Agnes is certain to have some comforting words to say."

Maria doubted both assertions. She could not see what good it could do her to go from one wretched house to another even more wretched, and Neil's assurances that John Bradley was better and able to go to his shop did not give her any more eager desire to try the suggested change. Yet to please Neil she went, though very reluctantly; and Madame sympathized with this reluctance. She thought it was Agnes Bradley's place to come and make some acknowledgment of the sorrow and loss her family had brought upon the Semples; and she recalled the innate aversion the Elder had always felt for the Bradley family.

"The soul kens which way trouble can come," she said. "But what is the good o' its warnings? Nobody heeds them."

"I never heard any warning, grandmother."

"There's nane so deaf as those who won't hear; but go your ways to your friend Agnes! I'll warrant she would rather you would bide at hame."

The morning was cold and damp and inexpressibly depressing, but Maria was in that mood which defies anything to be of consequence. She put on her hat and cloak and walked silently by her uncle's side until they came to the Bradley cottage. All the prettiness of its summer and autumn surroundings was blighted or dead; the door shut, the

window covered, the whole place infected by the sorrow which had visited it. Agnes opened the door. She was wan and looked physically ill and weary, but she smiled brightly at her visitor, and kissed her as she crossed the threshold.

"My father has been very ill, Maria, or I should have been to see you before this," she said; "but he has gone to the shop this morning. I fear he ought not."

"My grandfather has been very ill and is still unable to leave his room," replied Maria. "My dear grandmother also! As for myself—but that is of little importance, only I must say that it has been a dreadful thing to happen to us, a cruel thing!"

"It was a wrong thing to begin with. That is where all the trouble sprang from. I see it now Maria."

"Of course! You ought not to have deceived your father, Agnes."

"I was to blame in that, very much to blame. I have nearly broken my heart over the sin and its consequences."

"Consequences! Yes, for they fell upon the innocent—that is what you ought to be sorry for—my grandfather and grandmother, my Uncle Neil, and even myself."

"But as for yourself, Maria, you also were to blame. If you would have been content with seeing Harry here——"

"Oh, indeed! You did not permit me to see Harry here, or even to bid him good-bye that night. If you had——"

"It would have made no difference. Harry as

well as you seemed willing to run all risks to meet —elsewhere."

"I never thought of meeting Harry elsewhere. I have told you this fact before."

"If you had not done so, if Harry had not known you would do so again, he would not have asked you."

"This is the last time I will condescend to tell you, Agnes, that I never once met Harry by appointment; much less, at nine o'clock at night. Please remember this!"

"It is, then, very strange, that Harry should have asked you that night."

"Not only very strange, but very impertinent. Why should he suppose Maria Semple would obey such a command? For it was a command. And it was a further impertinence to send me this command on a bit of common paper, wrapped around a stone and thrown at me through a window. It was a vulgar thing to do, also, and I never gave Harry Bradley the smallest right to order me to meet him anywhere."

"Oh, if you look at things that way! But why did he ask you? That is a question hard to answer."

"Not at all. He was jealous of Macpherson and wished to show off his familiarity with me and make Macpherson jealous. Under this distracting passion he forgot, or he did not care, for the risk. It was your selfishness put the idea into his head, and it was his selfishness that carried it out, regardless of the consequences."

"And your selfishness, Maria, what of it?"

"I was not selfish at all. I knew nothing about

it. If I had received the note, I should not have answered it in any way."

"Are you sure of that?"

"Absolutely sure. It angered me, humiliated me, wronged me beyond words. And to have it read in the Police Court! How would you feel, Agnes? It has ruined my life."

"Poor Harry!"

"Oh, but poor Maria! All this misery was brought to me without my knowledge and without any desert on my part. And don't you suppose I love my grandparents and Uncle Neil? Think what I have suffered when I saw them dragged to prison, tried, fined and disgraced, and all for a scribble of presumptuous words that Harry Bradley ought to have been ashamed to write. It was very thoughtless; it was very cruel."

"Harry suffered for his presumption; and as for the fine, my father will repay it to your grandfather. He said so this morning; said it would only be just; and I think so, too."

"The fine is the least part of the wrong. Who can repay grandfather and uncle for the loss of their good name and their honorable record? Who can give uncle his business back again? These are wrongs that cannot be put right with money. You know that, Agnes."

"Do not quarrel with me, Maria. I am not able to bear your reproaches. Let us at least be thankful that Harry's life is spared. When the war is over you may yet be happy together."

Then Maria burst into passionate weeping. "You know nothing Agnes! You know nothing!" she

cried. "I can never see Harry again! Never, never! Not even if he was in this house, *now*. How do you suppose he was saved?"

"Father has a great deal of influence, and he used it." Her calm, sad face, with its settled conviction of her father's power, irritated Maria almost beyond endurance. For a moment she thought she would tell her the truth, and then that proud, "not-caring," never far away from a noble nature stayed such a petty retaliation. She dried her eyes, wrapped her cloak around her, and said she "must not stop longer; there was trouble and sorrow at home and she was needed."

Agnes did not urge her to remain, yet she could not bear her to leave in a mood so unfriendly, and so despairing. "Forgive me, dear Maria," she whispered. "I have been wrong and perhaps unkind. I fear you are right in blaming me. Forgive me! I cannot part in such misunderstanding. If you knew all——"

"Oh, yes! And if you knew all."

"But forgive me! God knows I have suffered for my fault."

"And I also."

"Put your arms around my neck and kiss me. I cannot let you go feeling so unkindly to me. Do you hear, little one? I am sorry, indeed I am. Maria! Maria!"

Then they wept a little in each other's arms, and Maria, tear stained and heavy hearted, left her friend. Was she happier? More satisfied? More hopeful, for the interview? No. There had been no real confidence. And what is forgiveness under

any circumstances? Only incomplete understanding; a resolution to be satisfied with the wrong acknowledged and the pain suffered, and to let things go.

Certainly, nothing was changed by the apparent reconciliation; for as Maria sat by the fire that night she said to herself, "It is her fault. If she had given Harry five minutes, only five minutes, that night he never would have written that shameful note. It came of her delay and his hurry. I do not forgive her, and I will not forgive her! Besides, in her heart I know she blames me; I, who am perfectly innocent! She has ruined my life, and she looked as injured as if it was I who had ruined her life. I was not to blame at all, and I will not take any blame, and I will not forgive her!"

Maria's divination in the matter was clearly right. Agnes did blame her. She was sure Harry would not have written the note he did write unless he had received previous encouragement. "There must have been meetings in the Semples's garden before," she mused. "Oh, there must have been, or else Harry's note was inexcusable, it was impertinence, it was vulgarity. All the same, she need not have said these words to me."

So the reconciliation was only a truce; the heart-wound in both girls was unhealed; and if it were healed would not the scar remain forever?

Three or four days after this unsatisfactory meeting Neil came home in the afternoon just as the family were sitting down to the tea-table. "It is cruelly cold, mother," he said. "I will be grateful for a cup. I am shivering at my very heart." Then he

gave his father a business-like paper, saying, "I found it at my office this morning, sir."

"What is it Neil? What is it? More trouble?"

"No, sir. It is a deed making over to you the property in which Mr. Bradley has his shop and workrooms. He says in a letter to me that 'he feels this deed to be your right and his duty.' You are to hold the property as security until he pays you three hundred pounds with interest; and if you are not paid within three years you are to sell the property and satisfy yourself."

"You can give Mr. Bradley his deed back again, my lad. I can pay my own fines; or if I can't, I can go to prison. I'll not be indebted to him."

"You mistake, sir. This is a moral obligation, and quite as binding as a legal one to Mr. Bradley."

"Take the paper, Alexander," said Madame, "and be thankfu' to save so much out o' the wreck o' things. We havena the means nor the right, these days, to fling awa' siller in order to flatter our pride. In my opinion, it was as little as Bradley could do."

"I went at once to his shop to see him," continued Neil, "but he was not there. In the afternoon I called again, and found he had been absent all day. Fearing he was sick, I stopped at his house on my way home. A strange woman opened the door. She said Mr. Bradley and his daughter had gone away."

"Gone away!" cried Maria. "Where have they gone? Agnes said nothing to me about going away."

"The woman, Mrs. Hurd, she called herself, told

me Agnes did not know she was to leave New York until fifteen minutes before she started."

"When will they return?" asked Madame.

"God knows," answered Neil, going to the fire and stooping over it. "I am cold and sick, mother," he said. "It was such a shock. No one at the shop expected such an event; everything was as busy as possible there, but the house! the house is desolate."

"When did they go, Neil?"

"Last night, mother, at eleven o'clock. Mr. Bradley came in about twenty minutes before eleven, put Mr. and Mrs. Hurd in possession, and told Agnes to pack a change of clothing for herself in a leather saddlebag he gave her. There was a boat waiting for them, and they went away in the darkness without a word. *O Agnes!*"

"What did the Hurds say?"

"They know nothing."

"Did Agnes leave no letter?" asked Maria, looking with pitying eyes at her uncle.

"How could she? The poor child, how could she? She had no time. Some one had taken away her pens and pencils. She left a message with Mrs. Hurd. That was all."

That was all. The next day New York City knew that John Bradley had left his business and his home and disappeared as completely as a stone dropped into the river. No one had suspected his intention; not his foreman, nor any of the fifteen men working in his shop; not his most intimate friends, not even his daughter. But it was at once surmised that he had gone to the rebel army. People began to murmur at the clemency shown to his son,

and to comment on the almost offensive sympathy of the father for him. For a few days John Bradley was the absorbing topic of conversation; then he was forgotten by every one but Neil. His shop, indeed, was kept open by the foreman, under control of the government, but the name of Bradley was removed from above its entrance and the royal cipher G. R. put in its place. And in a few weeks his home was known as Hurd's place, and had lost all its little characteristics. Neil passed it every day with a heavy heart. There was no sweet face at the window to smile him a greeting; no beautiful woman to stand with him at the gate, or, hand in his hand, lead him into the little parlor and with ten minutes' conversation make the whole day bright and possible. The house looked forlorn; fire or candlelight were never visible, and he could only think of Agnes as driven away in the dark night by Destiny and wandering, he knew not where.

Maria, too, was unhappy. Her last visit to Agnes had been such a mockery of their once loving companionship. Her last visit! That word "last" took hold of her, reproached her, hurt her, made her sorry and anxious. She felt also for her uncle, who looked old and gray in his silent sorrow. Poor Neil! he had suffered so many losses lately; loss of money, loss of business, loss of friends, and to crown all these bereavements, the loss of the woman on whom he had fixed the love and light and hopes of his life. No wonder he was so mournful and so quiet; he, who had just begun to be really happy, to smile and be gracious and pleasant to every one, yes, and even to sing! Madame could not help noticing

the change. "He is worse than ever he was before," she said with a weary pity. "Dear me! what lots of sorrow women do manage to make!"

"This remark Maria did not approve of, and she answered it with some temper. "All this sorrow came from a man's hand, grandmother," she said, "and no woman is to blame."

"Not even yoursel', Maria?"

"I, least of all. Do you think that I would have met any man by the river side at nine o'clock at night?"

"I'll confess I have had my doubts."

"Then you ought to say, 'Maria, I am sorry I have had one doubt of you.' When you were Janet Gordon, would you have done a thing like that?"

"Not a man in Scotland could have trysted me at an hour when all my folk were in their rooms and maybe sleeping."

"Not a man in America could make such a tryst with me. I am your granddaughter."

"But that letter, Maria."

"It was a shame! A wrong I cannot forgive. I called it an impertinence to Agnes, and I feel it so. He had no reason to suppose I would answer such a request, such an order, I may say. I am telling you the truth, grandmother."

"I believe you, Maria; but the pity of it is that you canna advertise that fact."

"I know that. I know that everyone will doubt me or shun me. I shall be made to suffer, of course. Well, I can suffer and smile as well as any woman, —we all have that experience at some time or other."

"Men have it, too. Look at your uncle."

"Men don't smile when they suffer; they don't even try to. Uncle suffers, any one can see that, but he does not dress up in velvet and silk, and laugh, and dance, and talk nonsense merrily over the grave where all his hopes are buried. No, indeed! He looks as if he had lost the world. And he shuts himself in his room and swears at something or somebody; he does not cry like a woman and get a headache, as well as a heartache; he swears at his trouble and at everything connected with it. That is the way with men, grandmother, you know it is. I have heard both my grandfather and my uncle comforting themselves after this fashion. Grandfather, I thought, even seemed to enjoy it."

Madame smiled and then admitted "men had their ain ways, and so couldna be judged by woman's ways." Moreover, she told Maria in regard to Agnes that a friendship which had begun to decay was best cut off at once. And Maria, in spite of certain regrets, felt this to be a truth. Things were not the same between Agnes and herself; it was, then, more comfortable that they should not be at all.

Only, as day after day went by and no one took the place of Agnes or showed the slightest desire to do so, her life became very monotonous. This was specially remarkable, because New York was at a feverish point of excitement. General Clinton was hurrying his preparations for the reduction of the South. Any hour the troops might get marching orders, and every entertainment had the gaiety and

the melancholy of a farewell feast. All day long troops were moving hither and thither, and orderlies galloping in every direction. There was a constant rumble of army wagons in motion; trumpets were calling men together, drums beating them to their stations; and through all the blare and movement of a great military town in motion there was the tinkling of sleigh-bells and the glancing of splendidly caparisoned sleighs, full of women brilliantly dressed.

Now, although the Semple house was beyond the actual throng and tumult of these things, Maria heard the confused murmur of their activity; and Neil told her bare facts, which she easily clothed with all the accessories of their existence and movement. But although there were dinner parties and sleighing parties, nightly dances, and the promise of a fine theatrical season, with the officers of the army as actors, no one remembered her. She was shocked when she realized that she had been cut off from all social recognition. Setting aside the fact that Harry Bradley was a rebel, she had done nothing to deserve such ostracism; but, though conscious of her innocence, she did not find this inner approval as satisfying a compensation for outward respect and pleasant company as it is supposed to be.

As the days went on, she began to wonder at Lord Medway's absence. At least, if she was to be his wife he ought to show her some care and attention. She remembered that in their last important interview she had told him not to trouble her; but he ought to have understood that a woman's words,

in such trying circumstances, meant much less or much more than their face value.

Household anxieties of all kinds were added to these personal ones. Madame Semple was sick and full of domestic cares. Never had there been known in New York such bitter frost, such paralyzing cold. Snow lay four to six feet deep; loaded teams or galloping cavalry crossed the river safely on its solid ice. Neil had made arrangements for wood in the summer months, but only part of it had been delivered; the rest, though felled, could not be extricated from the frozen snowdrifts. The sale of the Mill Street property had left them a margin of ready money, but provisions had risen to fabulous prices and were not always procurable at any price. New York was experiencing, this cruel winter, all the calamities of a great city beleaguered both by its enemies and the elements.

Yet the incessant social gaiety never ceased. Thousands were preparing for the battlefield; thousands were dying in a virulent smallpox epidemic; thousands were half-frozen and half-fed; the prisons were crowded hells of unspeakable agonies; yet the officers in command of the city, and the citizens in office, the rich, the young and the beautiful, made themselves merry in the midst of all this death and famine, and found very good recreation in driving their jingling sleighs over the solid waters of the river and the bay.

In these bad times Neil was the stay and comfort of the Semple household. He catered for their necessities cheerfully, but his heart was heavy with anxious fear; and when he saw those he loved de-

prived of any comfort, he reproached himself for the pride which had made him resign offices so necessary for their welfare. This pinch of poverty, which he must conceal, made his whole being shrink with suffering he never named to any one. And besides, there was always that desolate house to pass and repass. How was it that its shut door affected him so painfully? He could only feel this question; he could not answer it. But, though he was not conscious of the fact, never had Neil Semple in all his life been at once so great and so wretched: great because he was able to put his own misery under the feet of those he loved; to forget it in noble smiles that might cheer them and in hopeful words, often invented for their comfort.

One day as he was walking down Broadway he saw a sleigh coming toward him. It was drawn by four black horses blanketed in scarlet, glittering with silver harness and tossing their plumed heads to the music of a thousand bells. As it drew nearer a faint smile came to his lips. He saw the fantastically-dressed driver and footman, and the brilliant mass of color surrounded by minever furs, and he knew it was Madame Jacobus, out to defy any other sleigh to approach her.

He expected only a swift, bright smile in passing, but she stopped, called him imperatively, and then insisted that he should take a seat beside her. "I have caught you at last," she said with a laugh. "It is high time. I asked you to come soon and see me, and you said you would. You have broken your word, sir. But nothing is binding where a woman is concerned; we have to live on broken scraps of

all kinds, or perish. You are going to dine with me. I shall take it very ill if you refuse;" then, more soberly, "I have some important things to say to you."

"It will be a great pleasure to dine with you," answered Neil.

"First, however, we will gallop a mile or two, just to show ourselves and get an appetite;" and the grave smile of pleasurable assent which accepted this proposition delighted her. In and out of the city ways they flew, until they reached the Bowery road; there they met the sleighs of generals and governors, dandy officers and wealthy commissioners, and passed them all. And Neil shared the thrill of her triumph and the physical delight of a pace no one could approach. Something like his old expression of satisfied consideration came into his face, and he was alive from head to feet when he reached Madame's fine house in lower Broadway,—a handsome, luxurious house, filled with treasures from every part of the world; no shadow of limitation in anything within it. The lunch, elaborately laid for Madame, was instantly extended for the guest, and Neil marvelled at the dainty liberality of all its arrangements. It was, indeed, well known that the Jacobus wealth was enormous, but here was a room warmed as if wood was of no great value; broiled birds, the finest of wheat bread, the oldest and best of wines.

"You see, I take good care of myself, Neil," said Madame. "I don't wish to die till the war is over. I am resolved to see Troy taken."

"You mean New York."

"I mean New York, of course."

"Do you really think the rebels will take New York?"

"The Greeks got into Troy by trying. I think others can do the same."

This was the only allusion made to public events during the meal; but when it was over and the servants had disappeared she set her chair before the roaring fire, spread out her splendid scarlet skirt, and, holding a gemmed fan between her face and the blaze, said:

"Now we will talk. You must tell me everything, Neil, without holdbacks. You are a lawyer and know that everything must be told or nothing. Do you feel that you can trust me?"

Then Neil looked into the dark, speaking face, bending slightly toward him. Kindness lighted its eyes and parted its lips, but, above all, it was a countenance whose truth was beyond question. "Madame," he answered, "I believe you are my friend."

"In plain truth, I am your friend. I am also your mother's friend. She is the best of women. I love her, and there's an end of it. When I came to New York first I was a stranger and people looked curiuosly, even doubtfully, at me. Janet Semple stood by me like a mother just as long as I needed her care. Do I forget? That is far from Angelica Jacobus. I never forget a kindness. Now, Neil, I have known you more than twenty years. What can I do for you?"

"O Madame, what can you not do? Your sympathy has put new life into me. I feel as if,

perhaps, even yet there may be happy days in store."

"Plenty of them. I hear you paid the fines immediately. Did they pinch you much?"

"No. Jacob Cohen bought a piece of land from me. I do believe he bought it out of pure kindness."

"Pure kindness and good business. He knows how to mingle things. But that Jew has a great soul. Jacobus has said so often, and no one can deceive Jacobus. But what are these stories I hear about your lovely niece? Is there any truth in them?"

"None, I'll warrant," answered Neil warmly. "But I will tell you the exact truth, and then you may judge if little Maria deserves to be treated as people are now treating her."

Then Neil succinctly, and with clearness and feeling, told the story of Maria's entanglement with Harry Bradley, laying particular stress on the fact that she never had met him clandestinely, and that his note had been a great offense and astonishment to her. "I was present," he said, "when my father told her of the note, and of its being read in the Police Court, and I shall never forget her face. It is an easy thing to say that a person was shocked, but Maria's very soul was so dismayed and shocked that I seemed to see it fly from her face. She would have fallen had I not caught her. Why was that note written? I cannot understand it."

"It was never intended for Maria. It was written to wound the vanity and fire the jealousy of that Scot. As soon as Maria left the room the opportunity was seized. Can you not see that? And

Harry Bradley never dreamed that the kilted fool would turn an apparent love-tryst into a political event. He wished to make trouble between Macpherson and Maria, but he had no intention of making the trouble he did make. He also was jealous, and when two jealous men are playing with fire the consequences are sure to be calamitous. But Macpherson is sorry enough now for his zeal in His Majesty's affairs. He is thoroughly despised by both men and women of the first class. I, myself, have made a few drawing-rooms places of extreme humiliation to him."

"Still, others think the man simply did his duty. A Scotsman has very strong ideas about military honor and duty."

"Fiddlesticks! Honor and duty! Nothing of the kind. It was a dirty deed, and he is a dirty fellow to have done it. There was some decent way out of the dilemma without going through the Police Court to find it. Grant me patience with such bouncing, swaggering, selfish patriotism! A penny's worth of common-sense and good feeling would have been better; but it was his humor to be revengeful and ill-natured, and he is, of course, swayed by his inclinations. Let us forget the creature."

"With all my soul."

"The stories are various about Maria going to General Clinton and begging her lover's life with such distraction that he could not refuse it to her. Which story is the true one?"

"They are all lies, I assure you, Madame. It was Lord Medway who begged Harry Bradley's life."

"But why?"

Neil paused a minute, and then answered softly, "For Maria's sake."

"Oh, I begin to understand."

"She has promised to marry him when she is of age—then, or before."

"I am very glad. Medway is a man full of queer kinds of goodness. When the Robinsons and Blundells, when Joan Attwood and Kitty Errol and all the rest of the beauties, hear the news, may I be there to see? Is it talkable yet?"

"No, not yet. Maria has told no one but me, and I have told no one but you. Medway is to see my father and mother; after that—perhaps. He has not called since the arrangement; he told me 'he was doing the best thing under the circumstances.'"

"Of course he is. Medway understands women. He knows that he is making more progress absent than he would present. Come, now, things are not so bad, socially. Mrs. Gordon and Angelica Jacobus will look after Maria; and, though women can always be abominable enough to their own sex, I think Maria will soon be beyond their shafts. Now, it is business I must speak of. Patrick Huges, my agent, is robbing me without rhyme or reason. I had just sent him packing when I met you. The position is vacant. Will you manage my affairs for me? The salary is two hundred pounds a year."

"Madame, the offer is a great piece of good fortune. From this hour, if you wish it, I will do your business as if it were my own."

"Thank you, Neil. In plain truth, it will be a great kindness to me. We will go over the rascal's accounts to-morrow, and he will cross the river to

night if he hears that Neil Semple is to prosecute the examination."

Then Neil rose to leave. Madame's sympathy and help had made a new man of him; he felt able to meet and master his fate, whatever it might be. At the last moment she laid her hand upon his arm. "Neil," she asked, "Has not this great outrage opened your eyes a little. Do you still believe in the justice or clemency of the King?"

"It was not the King."

"It was the King's representatives. If such indignity is possible when we are still fighting, what kind of justice should we get if we were conquered?"

"I know, I know. But there is my father. It would break his heart if I deserted the royal party now. They do not know in England——"

"Then they ought to know; but for many years I have been saying, 'England was mad'; and she grows no wiser."

"Englishmen move so slowly."

"Of course. All the able Englishmen are on this side of the Atlantic. Lord! how many from the other side could be changed for the one Great One on this side. What do you think? It was my silk, lace, ribbons and fallals Harry Bradley was taking across the river. The little vanities were for my old friend Martha. I am sorry she missed them."

Neil looked at her with an admiring smile. "How do you manage?" he asked.

"I have arranged my politics long since, and quite to my satisfaction. So has Jacobus. He left New York flying the English flag, but the ocean has a wonderful influence on him; his political ideas grow

large and free there; he becomes—a different man. Society has the same effect on me. When I see American women put below that vulgar Mrs. Reidesel——"

"Oh, no, Madame!"

"Oh, yes, sir. In the fashionable world we are all naught unless Mrs. General Reidesel figures before us; then, perhaps, we may acquire a kind of value. See how she is queening it in General Tryron's fine mansion. And then, this foreign mercenary, Knyphausen, put over American officers and American citizens! It is monstrous! Not to be endured! I only bear it by casting my heart and eyes to the Jersey Highlands. There our natural ruler waits and watches; here, we wait and watch, and some hour, it must be, our hopes shall touch God's purposes for us. For that hour we secretly pray. It is not far off." And Neil understood, as he met her shining eyes and radiant smile, that there are times when faith may indeed have all the dignity of works.

Then the young man, inexpressibly cheered and strengthened, went rapidly home; and when Madame heard her son's steps on the garden walk she knew that something pleasant had happened to him. And it is so often that fortune, as well as misfortune, goes where there is more of it that Neil was hardly surprised to see an extraordinarily cheerful group around an unusually cheerful fireside when he opened the parlor door. The Elder, smiling and serene, sat in his arm-chair, with his finger-tips placidly touching each other. Madame's voice had something of its old confident ring in it, and Maria,

with heightened color and visible excitement, sat between her grandparents, an unmistakable air of triumph on her face.

"Come to the fire, Neil," said his mother, making a place for his chair. "Come and warm yoursel'; and we'll hae a cup o' tea in ten or fifteen minutes."

"How cheerful the blazing logs are," he answered. "Is it some festival? You are as delightfully extravagant as Madame Jacobus. Oh, if the old days were back again, mother!"

"They will come, Neil. But wha or what will bring us back the good days we hae lost forever out o' our little lives while we tholed this weary war? However, there is good news, or at least your father thinks so. Maria has had an offer o' marriage, and her not long turned eighteen years auld, and from an English lord, and your father has made a bonfire o'er the matter, and I've nae doubt he would have likit to illuminate the house as weel."

The Elder smiled tolerantly. "Janet," he answered, "a handsome young man, without mair than his share o' faults and forty thousand pounds a year, is what I call a godsend to any girl. And I'm glad it has come to our little Maria. I like the lad. I like him weel. He spoke out like a man. He told me o' his castle and estate in Lancashire, and o' the great coal mines on it; the lands he owned in Cumberland and Kent, his town house in Belgrave Square, and forbye showed me his last year's rental, and stated in so many words what settlement he would make on Maria. And I'm proud and pleased wi' my new English grandson that is to be. I shall hold my head higher than ever before; and as for

Matthews and Peter DuBois, they and their dirty Police Court may go to ——, where they ought to have been years syne, but for God Almighty's patience; and I'll say nae worse o' them than that. It's a great day for the Semples, Neil, and I am wonderfully happy o'er it."

"It's a great day for the Medways," answered Madame. "I could see fine how pleased he was at the Gordon connection, for when I told him Colonel William Gordon, son o' the Earl o' Aberdeen—him wha raised the Gordon Highlanders a matter o' three years syne—was my ain first cousin, he rose and kissed my hand and said he was proud to call Colonel Gordon his friend. And he knew a' about the Gordons and the warlike Huntleys, and could even tell me that the fighting force o' the clan was a thousand claymores; a most intelligent young man! And though I dinna like the thought o' an Englishman among the Gordons, there's a differ even in Englishmen; some are less almighty and mair sensible than others.

"He spoke very highly o' the Americans," answered the Elder. "He said 'we were all o' one race, the children o' the same grand old mother.'"

"The Americans are obligated for his recognition," replied Madame a trifle scornfully. "To be sure, it's a big feather in our caps when Lord Medway calls cousins with us."

"What does Maria say?" asked Neil. And Maria raised her eyes to his with a look in them of which he only had the key. So to spare her talking on the subject, he continued: "I also have had a piece of good fortune to-day. I met Madame Jacobus, went

home with her to dinner, and she has offered me the position of her business agent, with a salary of two hundred pounds a year."

"It's a vera springtide o' good fortune," said the Elder, "and I am a grateful auld man."

"Weel, then," cried Madame, "here comes the tea and the hot scones; and I ken they are as good as a feast. It's a thanksgiving meal and no less; come to the table wi' grateful hearts, children. I'm thinking the tide has turned for the Semples; and when the tide turns, wha is able to stop it?"

The turn of the tide! How full of hope it is! Not even Maria was inclined to shadow the cheerful atmosphere. Indeed, she was grateful to Lord Medway for the fresh, living element he had brought into the house. Life had been gloomy and full of small mortifications to her since the unfortunate Bradley affair. Her friends appeared to have forgotten her, and the dancing and feasting and sleighing went on without her presence. Even her home had been darkened by the same event; her grandfather had not quite recovered the shock of his arrest; her grandmother had made less effort to hide her own failing health. Neil had a heartache about Agnes that nothing eased, and the whole household felt the fear and pinch of poverty and the miserable uncertainty about the future.

Maria bore her share in these conditions, and she had also began to wonder and to worry a little over Lord Medway's apparent indifference. If he really loved her, why did he not give her the recognition of his obvious friendship? His presence and attentions would at least place her beyond the spite and

envy of her feminine rivals. Why did he let them have one opportunity after another to smile disdain on her presence, or to pointedly relegate her to the outer darkness of non-recognition? When she had examined all her slights and sorrows, Lord Medway's neglect was the most cutting thong in the social scourge.

Madame Jacobus, however, was correct in her opinion. Medway was making in these days of lonely neglect a progress which would have been impossible had he spent them at the girl's side. And if he had been aware of every feeling and event in the lives of the Semples, he could not have timed his hour of reappearance more fortunately, for not only was Maria in the depths of despondency, but the Elder had also begun to believe his position and credit much impaired. He had been passed, avoided, curtly answered by men accustomed to defer to him; and he did not take into consideration the personal pressure on these very men from lack of money, or work, or favor; nor yet those accidental offenses which have no connection with the people who receive them. In the days of his prosperity he would have found or made excuses in every case, but a failing or losing man is always suspicious, and ready to anticipate wrong.

But now! Now it would be different. As he drank his tea and ate his buttered scone he thought so. "It will be good-morning, Elder. How's all with you? Have you heard the news? and the like of that. It will be a different call now." And he looked at Maria happily, and began to forgive her for the calamity she had brought upon them. For

it was undeniable that even in her home she had been made to feel her responsibility, although the blame had never been voiced.

She understood the change, and was both happy and angry. She did not feel as if any one—grandfather, grandmother, Lord Medway, or Uncle Neil—had stood by her with the loyal faith they ought to have shown. All of them had, more or less, suspected her of imprudence and reckless disregard of their welfare. All of them had thought her capable of ruining her family for a flirtation. Even Agnes, the beginning and end of all the trouble, had been cold and indifferent, and blamed, and left her without a word. And as she did not believe herself to have done anything very wrong, the injustice of the situation filled her with angry pain and dumb reproach.

Lord Medway's straightforward proposal cleared all the clouds away. It gave her a position at once that even her grandfather respected. She was no longer a selfish child, whose vanity and folly had nearly ruined her family. She was the betrothed wife of a rich and powerful nobleman, and she knew that even socially reprisals of a satisfactory kind would soon be open to her. The dejected, self-effacing manner induced by her culpable position dropped from her like a useless garment; she lifted her handsome face with confident smiles; she was going, not only to be exonerated, but to be set far above the envy and jealousy of her enemies. For Medway had asked her to go sleighing with him on the following day, and she expected that ride to atone for many small insults and offenses.

Twice during the night she got up in the cruel cold to peep at the stars and the skies. She wanted a clear, sunny day, such a day as would bring out every sleigh in the fashionable world; and she got her desire. The sun rose brilliantly, and the cold had abated to just the desirable point; the roads, also, were in perfect condition for rapid sleighing, and at half-past eleven Medway entered the parlor, aglow with the frost and the rapid motion.

His fine presence, his hearty laugh, his genial manners, were irresistible. He bowed over Madame's hand, and then drew Maria within his embrace. "Is she not a darling? and may I take her for an hour or two, grandmother?" he asked. And Madame felt his address to be beyond opposition. He had claimed her kinship; he had called her "grandmother," and she gave him at once the key of her heart.

As they stood all three together before the fire, a servant man entered and threw upon the sofa an armful of furs. "I have had these made for you, Maria," said Medway. "Look here, my little one! Their equals do not exist outside of Russia." And he wrapped her in a cloak of the finest black fox lined with scarlet satin, and put on her head a hood of scarlet satin and black fox, and slipped her hands into a muff of the same fur lined with scarlet satin; and when they reached the waiting sleigh he lifted her as easily as a baby into it, and seating himself beside her, off they went to the music in their hearts and the music in the bells; and the pace of the four horses was so great that Madame declared "all she

could see was a bundle of black fur and flying scarlet ribbons."

That day Maria's cup of triumph was full and running over. Before they had reached the halfway house they had met the entire fashionable world of New York, and every member of it had understood that Maria Semple and Lord Medway would now have to be reckoned with together. For Medway spoke to no one and returned no greeting that did not include Maria in it. Indeed, his neglect of those who made this omission was so pointed that none could misconstrue it. Maria was, therefore, very happy. She had found a friend and a defender in her trouble, and she was, at least, warmly grateful to him. He could see it in her shining eyes, and feel it, oh, so delightfully! in her unconscious drawing closer and closer to him, so that finally his hands were clasping hers within the muff of black fox, and his face was bending to her with that lover-like, protecting poise there was no mistaking.

"Are you satisfied, Maria? Are you happy?" he asked, when the pace slackened and they could talk a little.

"Oh, yes!" she answered. "But why did you wait so long? I was suffering. I needed a friend; did you not understand?"

"But you had a sorrow I could not share. I did not blame you for it. It was but natural you should weep a little, for the young man had doubtless made some impression. He was a gallant fellow, and between life and death carried himself like a prince. I am glad I was able to save his life; but I did not

wish to see you fretting about him; that was also natural."

She did not answer, nor did he seem to expect an answer. But she was pleased he did not speak slightingly of Harry. Had he done so, she felt that she would have defended him; and yet, in her deepest consiousness she knew this defense would have been forced and uncertain. The circumstances were too painful to be called from the abyss of past calamity. It was better everything should be forgotten. And with the unerring instinct of a lover, Medway quickly put a stop to her painful reverie by words that seldom miss a woman's appreciation. He told her how much he had longed to be with her; how tardily the weeks had flown; how happy it made him to see her face again. He called her beautiful, bewitching, the loveliest creature the sun shone on, and he said these things with that air of devoted respect which was doubly sweet to the girl, after the social neglect of the past weeks. Finally he asked her if she was cold, and she answered:

"How can I be cold? These exquisite furs are cold-proof. Where did you get them? I have never seen any like them before."

"I got them in St. Petersburg. I was there two years ago on a political embassy, and while I was waiting until you partly recovered yourself I had my long coat cut up and made for you. I am delighted I did it. You never looked so lovely in anything I have seen you wear. Do you like them, Maria, sweet Maria?"

She looked at him with a smile so ravishing that he had there and then no words to answer it. He

spoke to the driver instead, and the horses bounded forward, and so rapid was the pace that the city was soon reached, and then her home. Neil was at the gate to meet them, and Medway lifted Maria out of the sleigh and gave her into his care. "I will not keep the horses standing now;" he said, "but shall I call to-morrow, Maria, at the same time?" And she said, "Yes," and "I have had a happy drive." So he bowed and went away in a dash of trampling horses and jingling bells, and Maria watched him a moment or two, being greatly impressed by his languid, yet masterful, air and manner, the result of wealth long inherited and of social station beyond question.

With a sigh—and she knew not why she sighed —Maria went into the house. She was now quite forgiven; she could feel that she was once more loved without reservation, and also that she had become a person of importance. It was a happy change, and she did not inquire about it, or dampen the pleasure by asking for reasons. She took off her beautiful furs, showed them to her grandmother and grandfather, and told at what personal sacrifice Lord Medway had given them to her. And then, drawing close to the hearth, she described the people they had met, and the snubs and recognitions given and received. It was all interesting to Madame, and even to the Elder; the latter, indeed, was in extraordinary high spirits, and added quite as much salt and vinegar to the dish of gossip as either of the women.

In spite, therefore, of the bitter weather and the scarcity of all the necessaries of life, the world went

very well again for the Semples; and though at the end of December, Clinton sailed southward, Lord Medway had a furlough for some weeks, so that in this respect the military movement did not interfere with Maria's social pleasures. Two days before the embarkment of the troops Colonel DeLancey called one morning on the Elder. He had sold a piece of property to the government, and in making out the title information was wanted that only Elder Semple, who was the original proprietor, could give. DeLancey asked him, therefore, to drive back with him to the King's Arms and settle the matter, and the Elder was pleased to do so. Anything that took him among his old associates and gave him a little importance was particularly agreeable, and in spite of the cold he went off in the highest spirits.

The King's Arms was soon reached, and he found in its comfortable parlor General Ludlow, Recorder John Watts, Jr., Treasurer Cruger, Commissioners DeGeist and Housewert, and Lawyer Spiegel. After Semple's arrival the business which had called them together was soon settled, and it being near noon, Ludlow called for a bottle of old port and some beef sandwiches. The room was warm and bright, the company friendly and well informed on political matters, and a second bottle was drunk ere they made a movement to break up the pleasant meeting. Then Ludlow arose, and for a few minutes they stood around the blazing fire, the Elder very happy in the exercise of his old influence and authority. But just as they were going to shake hands the door was flung open and Captain Macpherson appeared. For a moment he stood irreso-

lute, then he suddenly made up his mind that he had chanced upon a great opportunity for placing himself right with the public, and so, advancing toward Elder Semple, who had pointedly turned his back upon him, he said:

"Elder, I am grateful for this fortunate occasion. I wish before these gentlemen to assure you that I did my duty with the most painful reluctance. I beg you to forgive the loss and annoyance this duty has caused you."

Then Semple turned to him. His eyes were flashing, his face red and furious. He looked thirty years younger than usual, as with withering scorn he answered:

"*Caitiff!* Out of my sight!"

"No, sir," continued the foolish young man, "not until you listen to me. As a soldier and a gentleman, I had a duty to perform."

"You hae covered the names o' 'soldier' and 'gentleman' wi' infamy. Duty, indeed! What duty o' yours was it to examine a letter that came to a house where you were making an evening call? No matter how the letter came—through the window or by the door—you had nae duty in the matter. It was your cursed, curious, spying impertinence. No gentleman would hae opened it. The letter was not directed to you,—you admitted that in court. God in Heaven! What right had you to open it?"

"Allow me to ask, Elder, what you would have done if you had been an officer in His Majesty's service and had been placed in the same circumstances?"

"Done? Why, you villain, there was only *one*

thing to do, and an officer, if he was a gentleman, would have done it,—given the letter to Miss Bradley unopened. She was the mistress of the house, and entitled to see the letters coming to it. What had you to do wi' her letters? If you had kept your fingers frae picking and your e'en frae spying, you would not have put yoursel' in an utterly shamefu' dilemma."

"In these times, sir——"

"In this case the times are nae excuse. Mr. Bradley was believed by everybody to be a friend of His Majesty. You had nae reason whatever to suppose a treasonable note would come to his house. You did not suppose it. My God, sir! if our letters are to be examined by His Majesty's officers, wha is safe? An enemy might throw a note full o' treason through a window, and if *you* happened to be calling there——"

"Mr. Semple, you are insulting."

"I mean to be insulting. What right had you to speak to me? You Judas! who could eat my bread, and borrow my siller, and pretend to love my granddaughter. You have smirched your colors and dishonored your sword, and you deserve to be drummed out o' your regiment; you do that, you eternal scoundrel, you!"

By this time the Elder's voice filled the room, and he brought his cane down as if it were twenty. "Out o' my sight," he shouted, "or I'll lay it o'er your shoulders, you blackguard aboon ten thousand;"

"Your age, sir! your age!" screamed the enraged young fellow; but his words almost choked him, and

de Geist and Cruger took him forcibly out of the room.

Then DeLancey filled a glass with wine. "Sit down and drink it, Elder," he said. "Afterward I shall have the great honor and pleasure of driving you home." And the approval of every one present was too marked to be misunderstood. Semple felt it in every handclasp, and saw it in every face.

Also, Semple had his own approval, and the result of it in his voice and manner troubled Janet. She was ignorant of its cause, and the Elder was not prepared to tell her. "The fool may think himself bound to challenge me," he thought, "and I'll e'en wait till he does it, or else till Clinton carries him awa' to fight rebels."

But he was nearly betrayed by Neil, who entered the parlor in an almost buoyant manner for one so naturally grave. "Why, father," he said, "what is this I hear?" and then he suddenly stopped, having caught his father's warning glance .

"You hae heard many things doubtless, Neil," answered the Elder, "and among them that I and DeLancey were driving together. We had a rather cheerful time at the King's Arms o'er a bit of transferring business. The government must hae clear titles, you ken, to the property it buys."

"A clear title is beyond the government," interrupted Madame, "and the government needna' fash itsel' about titles. Nane that can be made will hold good much longer for the government. Sit down, Neil, and see if you can steady your father a bit; he's as much excited about a ride wi' auld DeLancey as if King George himsel' had gien him a ride in his

chariot;" and she flipped her dress scornfully to the words as she left the room to give some household order.

"You vera near told tales on me, Neil," said the old man gleefully; "and there's nae need to mention the bit o' scrimmage till we see if it's finished. The lad might send me a challenge," he added with a little mirthful laugh.

"Not he, father! If he did, I should quickly answer it."

"You would mind your ain business, sir. As long as I bide in this warld I'll do my ain fighting, if I die for it."

"There's none can do it better, father. Errol told me your scorn overwhelmed Macpherson; and he said, moreover, that if the quarrel had come to blows he had no doubt you would have caned the scoundrel consumedly. They are talking of the affair all over town, and DeLancey is quite beyond himself about it. I heard him say that, though your hands quivered with passion, you stood firm as a rock, and that there were a few minutes at the last when no man could have tackled you safely." Then there was a sudden pause, for Madame reëntered, and the Elder looked at her in a way so full of triumph and self-satisfaction that he troubled her. "To think o' Alexander Semple being sae set up wi' DeLancey's nod and smile," she thought.

Then Neil turned the conversation on the social events of the day, and the topic allowed Madame some scope for the relief of her annoyance. Yet her anxiety about her husband continued, for the Elder was in extraordinarily high spirits. His

piquant, pawkie humor finally alarmed Madame. "Alexander," she said, "you had better go awa' to your bed. I dinna like to hear you joking out o' season, as it were. What has come o'er you, man?"

"Hear to your mother, Neil!" he answered. "When I sit still and silent, she asks, 'Have you naething to say, auld man?' and when I say something she doesna' like my way o' joking, and is for sending me awa' to bed for it, as if I was a bairn. However, the day is o'er, and we hae had the glory o' it, and may as weel get rested for the day to come."

He left the room in his old sober fashion, with a blessing and a "Good-night, children," and Madame followed him. Maria rose with her; she was anxious to carry her thoughts into solitude. But Neil sat still by the fireside, dreaming of Agnes Bradley, and yet finding the dream often invaded by the thought of the retributive scene in the parlor of the King's Arms. And perhaps never in all his life had Neil loved and honored his father more sincerely.

When Madame returned to the room he came suddenly out of his reverie. He saw at once that his mother was strangely troubled. She sat down and covered her face with her thin, trembling hands, and when Neil bent over her with a few soothing words she sobbed:

"Oh, my dear lad, I'm feared your father is *fey*, or else he has been drinking beyond his reason; and goodness knows what nonsense he has been saying. The men who brought sae much wine out may have done it to set him talking; and anyway, it shames me, it pains me, to think o' Alexander Semple being

the butt o 'a lot o' fellows not worthy to latch his shoe buckles. But he's getting auld, Neil, he's getting auld; and he's always been at the top o' the tree in every one's respect, and I canna bear it."

"Dear mother, never has father stood so high in all good men's opinion as he stands this night. He has a little secret from you, and, I dare say, it is the first in his life, and it is more than wine to him. It is the secret, not the wine."

"What is it, Neil? What is it?"

Then Neil sat down by his mother's side, and looking into her face with his own smiling and beaming, he told her with dramatic power and passion the story of "the bit scrimmage," as the Elder defined the wordy battle, adding, "There is not a man, young or old, in New York, that this night is more praised and respected for his righteous wrath than Alexander Semple. As for Quentin Macpherson, he may go hang!"

And long before the story was finished Madame was bridling and blushing with pride and pleasure. "The dear auld man! The brave auld man!" she kept ejaculating; and her almost uncontrollable impulse was to go to him and give him the kiss and the few applauding words which she knew would crown his satisfaction. But Neil persuaded her to dissemble her delight, and then turned the conversation on the condition of the city.

"It is bad enough," he said. "Famine and freezing will soon be here, and the town is left under the orders of a hired mercenary—a German, a foreigner, who neither understands us nor our lives or

language. It is a shameful thing. Was there no Englishman to defend New York? Every citizen, no matter what his politics, is insulted and sulky, and if Washington attacks the city in Clinton's absence, which he will surely do, they won't fight under Knyphausen as they would under a countryman. Even DeLancey would have been better. I, myself, would fight with a DeLancey leading, where I would be cold as ice behind Knyphausen."

"When men are left to themselves what fools they are," said Madame.

"They don't think so. You should hear the talk about what Clinton is going to do in the South, and he will find Cornwallis too much for him."

"How is that? Cornwallis?"

"Cornwallis hates Clinton passionately; he will sacrifice everything rather than coöperate with him. Clinton successful would be worse than his own disgrace. Yet Clinton is sure he will succeed in subduing the whole South."

"And Knyphausen?"

"Is sure he will capture General Washington, though Clinton failed in his alert for that purpose. The four hundred light horsemen he despatched came back as they went twenty-four hours after they started full of confidence."

"What frightened them?" asked Madame with a scornful laugh.

"The guides. They lost the road,—rebels at heart, doubtless,—the cold was intense, the snow deep, and the four hundred came home all frostbitten. The wretched rebel army must have had a

hearty laugh at Clinton's 'alert'—the alert which was to end the war by the capture of Washington."

"How could they expect such a thing?"

"Well, Washington was living in a house at Morristown, some distance from the huts occupied by the army. The army were in the greatest distress, nearly naked, hungry and cold, and the snow was deep around them. There was every reason to hope four hundred men on swift horses might be alert enough to surprise and capture the man they wanted."

"Nae! nae!" cried Madame. "The tree God plants no wind hurts; and George Washington is set for the defense and freedom o' these colonies. Cold and hungry men, snow-strangled roads, and four hundred alerts! What are they against the tree God plants? Only a bit wind that shook the branches and made the roots strike deeper and wider. And sae Clinton's alert having failed, Knyphausen is trying for another; is that it, Neil?"

"Yes. He considers Washington's capture his commission."

"And if he should capture him, what then?"

"If he is taken alive he will die the death of a traitor."

"And then?"

"Then the war would be over, the idea of independence would be buried, and we should be English subjects forever."

"And after that comes a cow to be shod. One thing is as likely as the other. The idea of independence will never be buried; we shall never again be subjects of the King o' England. In spite of all

the elements can do, in spite of what seems to us impossibilities, the tree God has planted no wind shall hurt. Many a day, Neil, I have steadied my soul and my heart as I went to and fro in my house singing or saying this bit verse, and I wrote it my ain sel':

No wind that blows can ever kill
The tree God plants;
It bloweth east; it bloweth west;
The tender leaves have little rest,
But any wind that blows is best.
The tree God plants
Strikes deeper root, grows higher still,
Spreads wider boughs for God's good will,
Meets all its wants.

Neil sighed, and rising suddenly, said, "Let us go upstairs; the room is growing very cold. And, mother, do not let father know I have told you about his 'bit scrimage.' It would rob him of the triumph of his own recital."

"I'll not say a word, Neil; you may be sure o' that."

And she did not say a word. Nevertheless, the Elder looked queerly at Neil the following evening, and when he found an opportunity, said, "You've been telling tales on me, lad. Your mother hasna petted me a' the day lang for naething. Some one has whispered a word in her ear. I can see it in her e'en and hear it in her voice, and feel it in the stroke o' her hand. I wonder who it was."

"A bird of the air often carries such matters, sir. It would be but the generality; the particulars can come from yourself only."

"Aye, to be sure!" And he smiled and seated himself comfortably in his chair before the blaze,

adding, "It was a wonderfu' bit o' comfort, Neil, and you'll stand by me if your mother thinks wrong o' it?"

"Shoulder to shoulder, sir. You did quite right."

CHAPTER X.

MARIA GOES TO LONDON.

As the days lengthened, the cold strengthened, and New York experienced a winter of unparallelled severity. Food could only be procured with hard money, and at exorbitant prices, and the scarcity of fuel added greatly to the general distress. Wall Street surrendered most of its beautiful century-old shade trees, to warm the family of the German General Riederel, and before Spring, the streets and lanes of the city, the gardens and pleasure grounds of the burghers, were shorn of their finest fruit and shade trees. The aged, the very young, the men in the prisons and hospitals perished in great numbers, and the deathly cold of the atmosphere was full of the unspeakable misery everywhere present.

These distressing conditions were intensified by the fear of an attack from Washington. The waters around New York were for several weeks so hard frozen that the heaviest artillery could easily have crossed on them; and the city in losing its insular position, lost its chief advantage for defense Knyphausen constantly expected Washington to cross the ice, and refugees and citizens alike, were formed into companies and subjected to garrison duty. During the dark, bitter watches, men some-

times froze at their posts, and women in their unheated rooms, knelt listening to the children's breathing, for the atmosphere was so deadly cold that the babes shivered, even in the covert of their mothers' breasts.

Yet, in this city of frost, and famine, and suffering, a hectic and most unnatural gaiety was kept up. Maria would have little part in it. She could find no pleasure in listening to comedies and songs, in a freezing temperature, and the warmth induced by dancing was generally followed by a most uncomfortable and dangerous chill. Her status in society also led her to feel more content in withdrawing from it a little. She was not yet to be classed among the married belles, nor was she quite at one with the girlhood that surrounded her. Her engagement to Lord Medway had set her a little apart; it was understood that she could not be in perfect sympathy with the plans and hopes of either maids or wives.

Yet her life was far from unhappy. She visited Mrs. Gordon and Mrs. Jacobus a great deal; and the latter delighted in making little lunches and dinners, where the three ladies were joined by Lord Medway, and Neil Semple, and very often also by Major André, whose versatile gifts and cheerful temperament were the necessary and delightful antitheses to Neil's natural gravity and Medway's cultivated restraint. The splendid rooms of Madame Jacobus were warm, her dinners well cooked, her wines of the finest quality, her good nature never failing. She made a pet of Maria, and Lord Medway—reclining with half-closed eyes in some luxurious chair—watched his betrothed managing this clever woman, so much

older than herself, with infinite satisfaction and amusement. He foresaw that she would be equal to any social position, and it never occurred to him that it was likely she would manage Lord Medway quite as thoroughly as she managed Madame Jacobus. Occasionally, Medway gave return dinners, at which Madame Semple presided, and then Maria sat at his right hand, and he proved himself to be the most charming of hosts, and the most devoted and respectful of lovers.

Conversation was never to make, every one spoke as they listed, and as their prejudices or convictions led them. There was no Quentin Macpherson present, and opinions were as much individual property as purses. One day, toward the end of January, when the temperature was so low that the dining-table had been drawn close to the hearth, the usual party were sitting in the warmth and glow of its roaring fire. The dinner was over, the servants had left the room, Medway and Maria were picking their walnuts out together, and Major André and Neil Semple talking of a game of chess. Then Madame Jacobus drawing her gay Indian shawl closer around her, said suddenly, "Pray what is the news? Has nobody a mouthful of intelligence? Are we to wait for the Americans to make us something to talk about?"

"Indeed Madame," answered Maria, "we have not yet exhausted their night attack on the British troops encamped on Staten Island."

"They got nothing but five hundred sets of frozen hands and ears," said Major André.

"Oh, yes, they did, sir; blankets and food count

for something these days," said Madame, "not to speak of the nine vessels destroyed at Decker's Ferry —and the prisoners."

"It was a dashing absurdity, Madame."

"With all my soul; yet I am glad, it was an American dashing absurdity."

"You should have seen Knyphausen when he heard of it," continued André. He pulled his whiskers savagely and said 'Egad! Damn! These Americans have the come-back-again, come-back-again, of the flies; to drive them off—it is impossible—they come-back-again.' We have, however, had our turn. Four nights ago, our troops entered Newark and Elizabeth and made a few reprisals, and then he began to hum:

"The New York rebs are fat,
But the Jersey rebs are fatter;
So we made an expedition,
And carried off the latter."

Medway laughed. "Madame," he said, "the Major was desperately dull last night, and I wondered at it. But, this morning, as you hear, he is delivered of his verse, and he is cheerful."

"Oh, if the war is degenerating into midnight robberies!" cried Madame, "why does not Washington come? What hinders him from at least trying to get into New York? I do believe if he simply stood on Broadway, he would draw three-fourths of the men in the city to him; why does he not try? It might end this dreadful war one way or the other, and people are beginning to be indifferent, which way. Why, in the name of wonder, does he not try?"

"It would be a desperate 'try,' " answered André.

"Yes, but when ordinary means fail, desperate remedies should be tried."

"I saw the exact copy of a letter written by General Washington on the eighth of this month," said Lord Medway, and in it he declares that his troops, both officers and men, are almost perishing for food; that they have been alternately without bread and meat for two weeks, a very scanty allowance of either, and frequently destitute of both. Furthermore, he describes his troops as almost naked, riotous, and robbing the people from sheer necessity. Can you expect a general to lead men in such a condition to battle? He performs a miracle in simply holding them together."

"The poor fellows! And we are warm and comfortable. It seems almost wrong."

"Oh, no!" said André. "It is the rebels who are wrong; they are like runaway horses, and, as I said to one who talked to me, 'my lad, a runaway horse punishes himself.' "

In such freedom of conversation, without a moment's doubt of each other, they passed the hours, and about four o'clock the party usually broke up, and Lord Medway wrapped Maria in her furs, and drove her home.

However, the weariest road sometimes comes to an end, and the long dreadful winter wore itself away, the ice broke up, and the sun shone warmly out of the blue skies, and the trees put forth their young, tender, little leaves. Every one was ready to cry with joy, the simple endurance of misery was over, men could now work and fight, and some

movement and change would be possible. Coming home from a delightful drive in the sweet Spring evening. Medway told Maria this, and added that his furlough, so long extended by General Clinton's love, would probably terminate as soon as active hostilities began. But it was not yet a present case, and Maria did not take the supposition to heart. Besides, there had been frequent talk of her lover's departure, and somehow or other, he had never gone. At the Semple gate they stood a while. There were some lilies growing near it, and their fairy-like bells shook in the fresh wind and scattered incense all around. Maria stooped, gathered a handful, and offered them to her lover.

"Kiss them first, for me, Maria," he said, and she buried her lovely face in the fragrant posy, and then lifted it full of delight and perfume. He thought he had never before seen her so purely exquisite, so freshly adorable. His love was a great longing, he could hardly bear to leave her. So he stood holding her hands and the lilies, and looking into her face, but saying nothing, till Maria herself spoke the parting words: "I see grandmother at the door, Ernest, she is calling me; now we must say good-bye!" He could not answer her, he only kissed the lilies, leaped into the carriage, and went speechlessly away.

Maria watched him a few moments, and then hastened into the house. Madame met her at the door. "There is a letter from your father, Maria," she said; "I thought you might want to tell Ernest what news it contained, so I called you, but you didna answer me."

"Yes, I answered, 'coming, grandmother,' and

here I am. What a thick letter! Have you one also?"

"Aye, there was one for your grandfather. Better take yours to your room. When you have read it, and changed your dress, tea will be waiting."

"Is grandfather at home?"

"He is; so do not stay up stairs too long."

She nodded a bright assent, and holding the letter in her hand went swiftly up the stairway. In half an hour she came back to the parlor, but her face was then troubled and even angry, and her eyes full of tears. She held out the letter to her grandmother, and asked, "Do you know what father has written to me about?"

"I have a very sure suspect," answered Madame; but she went on setting out her china, and did not lift her face, or offer any further opinion.

"It is a shame! I ought to have been told before."

Then the Elder rose, and came toward the tea-table, "Maria," he said, "you will not use such like words, whatever your father pleases to do. I hae nae doubt at all that he has chosen a good wife for himsel' and a good mother for you. You had a long letter; what does he say anent her?"

"She is a nonesuch, of course. No woman in England, or out of England like her."

"I expect as much; my son Alexander has my ain perception concerning women-folk. He would hae the best, or nane at a'. Wha was she? He said in my letter you would gie us a' the particulars."

"He has filled six pages about her. She was Miss Elizabeth Spencer. Father says her family is one

of the best and oldest in England. The Reverend Oswald Spencer married them; he is rector of St. Margaret's Church in London, and a distant relative."

"A very fashionable congregation, and nae doubt the living is according."

"Father has become a member of St. Margaret's, and he has a large mansion in the wealthy Bloomsbury district. He tells me that I must come home, the first opportunity that gives me a respectable companion."

"And it is just destiny, Maria, and not to be gainsayed," said her grandmother; "for Mrs. Gordon was here this afternoon to bid me farewell. Colonel Gordon has been exchanged, and has reached New York, and they sail in Saturday's packet for London. She will be delighted to hae your company, and a mair proper person to travel wi' you couldna find in America; for it isna only hersel', you will hae the Colonel also, to watch o'er you baith."

"Destiny or not, I won't go, grandmother."

"Dinna sow sorrow to yoursel'. They who cross destiny, make a cross for themsel's."

"I will hear what Ernest says about it."

"You arena your ain mistress yet, and God and man, baith, expect you to put your father's commands before all others," said the Elder.

"I think grandmother and you wish to get rid of me," and the tears sprang to her eyes, and she set her cup down with a noisy petulance.

There was a moment's silence and then the Elder

continued, "Your education isna finished yet, as your father says; it was broken up by the war."

"And the lessons at Bradley's house were worse than nane at all," interrupted Madame.

"You are to have masters of a' kinds; and your stepmother is a grand musician, I hear, and willing to teach you hersel'."

"I will not go to school again. I know all I want to know."

"You will hae to be schooled for the station you are to fit; your father has turned his loyalty into gold, for he has got it noticed by His Majesty, and been appointed to a rich place in the government offices. Forbye, he tells me, his new wife has a fortune in her ain right, and sae the world stands straight with him and his. You'll hae society o' the best sort, and I hope you'll do your part, to show all and sundry, that a little Colonial maid isna' behind English girls, in any usefu' or ornamental particular."

But Maria was indignant and unhappy, and the thought of going to London and of being under authority again was very distasteful to her. The Elder went early upstairs, in order to escape her complaining, and Madame after his departure, was a little more sympathetic. She petted her grandchild, and tried to make her see the bright side of the new life before her.

"You'll be taken to Court, doubtless, Maria, and there is the grand opera you have heard so much about, and lords and ladies for company——"

"I have had enough of lords and ladies, grandmother."

"And fine houses, and nae cold rooms in them; and plenty o' food and clothing at Christian prices, and a rich, powerfu' father, and a musical mother——"

"Stepmother you mean. Nobody can have more than one mother. My mother is dead, and no other woman can take her place."

"Ay, weel, I suppose you are nearby right. And I hae seen—mair than once or twice—that the bairn who gets a stepmother gets a stepfather, also. Sae mind your ways and your words, and give nae occasion to friend, or foe, for complaint."

As they were talking thus, they heard the garden gate open, and Madame said, "That is your Uncle Neil at last;" but Maria, with an eager, listening face, knew better. "It is not Uncle Neil," she said, "it is Ernest. Why does he come to-night? He told me he was going to a military dinner, given in honor of Colonel Gordon's return."

"If it is Lord Medway, bring him in here," said Madame. "Your grandfather is needing me, and doubtless wondering and fretting already at my delaying." She left the room with these words, and Lord Medway immediately joined Maria. He appeared hurried and annoyed, and without any preliminaries said:

"I must leave New York immediately, my dear Maria; sit down here, close beside me, my sweet one, and comfort me. I have worn out the patience of Lord Clinton, and now I must obey orders, not desires."

"I, also, am in the same predicament, Ernest. I am ordered to London, and must go by the first op-

portunity," said Maria; and then she told her lover the fear and trouble that was in her heart, and found plenty of sympathy in all that either wounded or angered her.

"But there is a remedy, my darling," said Medway. "Marry me to-morrow morning. I will make all the arrangements to-night—see the clergyman—see Mrs. Gordon, and your uncle Neil——"

"Stop, Ernest. It is useless to talk of such a thing as that. It is beyond our compact, too."

"The compact is idle wind before our love—you do love me, Maria? and he slipped down to his knees beside the little maid, and putting his arm around her waist, drew her face within the shining influence, the tender eagerness, of his entreating eyes.

Then a strange, wilful contradictious spirit took possession of her. This very outlet to her position had been in her mind—though unacknowledged—from the first presentment of the journey, and the new mother, and the resumed lessons; but now, that the gate was opened to her desire, something within her obstinately refused to move a step. Half the accidents in the hunting-field arise from arresting the horse in the leap, and half the disappointments of life may be laid to that hesitation, or stubbornness of will, which permits happiness—coming without notice, and demanding a confiding and instantaneous decision—to go past, and be probably lost for ever.

"You do love me, Maria? Oh, yes! you must have caught love from me. At this hour, say one word to assure me—will you not? Maria! Queen

of my soul, say you love me—Speak—only yes——Maria!"

He waited, he watched her lovely face for some tender change, her eyes for some assuring glance, her lips for the one little word that would make the hour heaven to him, and she was still and speechless as some exquisite picture.

"After all these happy weeks, will you send me away without one word? It is incredible—impossible! Why are you so cold?—now—when we must part—or be always together? Are you afraid to be with me always? You have promised to marry me——"

"Yes—when the time comes."

"Cannot love put the time forward?"

"I don't know."

"We could then go South together."

"I do not want to go South."

"With me, Maria?"

"No."

"Then you will go to London, and your father will have complete control of you, he may make you marry some other man."

"No one can make me break my word of honor—you have my promise."

"I am wretched. I am broken-hearted. I have failed in making you love me. I will go to the front—what does it matter if I am killed? You will not care."

"Of course I shall care, Ernest."

"Say that a little differently, then I shall be satisfied. Put your arms round my neck; kiss me, if

only once, you never have kissed me yet, say, 'I love you, Ernest'; come, my dear one, comfort me a little!"

Her heart was on fire, it throbbed and struggled like a bound creature. She looked sadly, even tenderly at her lover, but she could not break the thrall of careless impassiveness that bound her, as streams are bound in ice. Medway wearied himself with entreaty. She trembled to its passion, but remained inarticulate. He was at first disappointed, then astonished, then, weary with his own emotion, wounded and sorrowful. He rose, put on his hat and gloves, and prepared to leave her. It was like the nailing of the coffin lid over a sensitive form; but still that strange, insuperable apathy was not broken.

"Good-bye, Maria! My life, my love, good-bye! and if forever, still——*Maria! Maria!*" and those two last words were not only speech, they were a cry from a heart hurt beyond hoping, a cry full of despairing affection. The door closed to them, and its clash broke the icy bounds of that soul stupor which had held her like a spell.

"Ernest! Ernest!" she called passionately, but he was beyond hearing, and ere she reached the parlor door, she heard the entrance door clash in the same fatal, final manner. Yet, walking as if in some evil dream she reached it, and with a great effort threw it wide open. Her lover was just beyond the garden gate. Would he not turn his head? Oh, would he not look round and see her! No. He caught no sound of her sorrowful entreaty; he cast no backward glance to the distracted girl, who

reached the outer gate, only to see his tall, soldierly figure blend itself with the misty night shadows, and then vanish entirely.

Never, never in all her life had Maria been so wretched. In the Bradley affair, she had at least the consciousness that it was not her doing; she was the victim of circumstances she could not control; but this cup of sorrow she had stubbornly mixed for herself. And that was the smallest part of her remorse; she had made the man who loved her so dearly, drink of it also. And it had all happened in such a tragically short time. Oh, to call back the last hour! only five minutes of it, that she might see again the handsome face that had never turned to her except with love and tender kindness! Alas, alas, there is no return to our lost Edens! Whatever gardens of pleasure we may find in the future, our past Edens are closed. The cherubim are at the gate, and the flaming sword.

She went despairingly to her room, and sat for two bitter hours speechless, astonished at her own folly and wilfulness. She could blame no one. Destiny in this case had used only the weapons she herself put into her hand. She did not complain, nor even weep, her grief found no passage to her eyes, it sank inward and seemed for the first hour or two to drown her heart in a dismal, sullen stillness, which made her feel the most forlorn and abandoned of creatures.

But even in these dark hours she was trying the wings that should take her out of them. As she sat musing the inner woman returned to the post she had so criminally deserted, and at once began to sug-

gest remedies. "Nothing is desperate," she whispered; "in every loss, but the loss of death, there is room for hope; write a letter, Neil will take it, he may yet be detained."

She took out pen and paper, and wrote the words Medway had begged her to say; wrote, indeed, far more than the one tender "yes" he had asked for. Then she sealed the letter and sat with it in her hand, waiting for Neil. He was so late that she thought he must have reached his room unheard, and toward midnight she tip-toed along the corridor to his door. There was no light, no sound, and when she knocked, no response. Anxiously she resumed her watch, and soon after twelve o'clock heard him enter the house. She went noiselessly down stairs to meet him. "Neil," she said, "can you find Ernest? Oh, if you can, you must carry this letter to him! Neil, it is the very greatest favor I can ever ask of you. Do not speak, if you are going to refuse me."

"My dear Maria, I know not where to find Lord Medway. He ought to have been at the dinner given to Colonel Gordon, and he was not there."

"He was here," she said wearily; "he is going South at once; he must, he must have this letter first. Neil, good, kind Uncle Neil, try and find him!"

"Be reasonable, Maria. If he is paying farewell calls—which is likely—how can I tell at whose house he may be; at any rate it is too late now for him to be out, the city is practically closed; any one wandering about it after midnight is liable to arrest, and if Ernest is not visiting, he is in his rooms, and likely to be there till near noon to-morrow. I will carry this letter before breakfast, if you say so, but——"

"I tell you he is going to General Clinton at once. He told me so."

"He cannot go until the *Arethusa* sails. She leaves to-morrow, but the tide will not serve before two o'clock. Give me the letter; I will see he gets it very early in the morning."

With a sigh she assented to this promise, and then slipped back into the sorrowful solitude of her room. But the talk with Neil had slightly steadied her. Nothing more was possible; she had done all she could to atone for her unkindness, and after a little remorseful wandering outside the Eden she had herself closed, she fell asleep and forgot all her anxiety.

And it is this breaking up of our troubles by bars of sleep that enables us to bear them and even grow strong in conquering them. When the day broke Maria was more alert, more full of purpose, and ready for what the morning would bring her. Neil was missing at breakfast and she found out that he had left the house soon after seven o'clock. So she dressed herself carefully and took her sewing to the front window. When she saw her lover at the gate, she intended to go and meet him, and her heart was warm and eager with the kind words that she would at last comfort him with.

It was half-past eight; by nine o'clock—at the very latest by half-past nine—he would surely answer that loving letter. Nine o'clock struck, and the hands on the dial moved forward inexorably to ten o'clock—to eleven—to noon. But long before that hour Maria had ceased to sew, ceased to watch, ceased to hope. Soon after twelve she saw Neil coming and her heart turned sick within her. She

could hardly walk into the hall to meet him. She found it difficult to articulate the questioning word "Well?"

He gave her the letter back. "Ernest sailed this morning at two o'clock," he said.

She looked at him with angry despair. "You might have taken that letter last night. You have ruined my life. I will never forgive you."

"Maria, listen to me. Ernest went on board an hour before you asked me. The ship dropped down the river to catch the early tide; he was on her at half-past ten. I could not have given him the letter, even if I had tried to."

"No; of all the nights in the year, you must stop out last night until twelve o'clock! I never knew you do such a thing before; well, as grandmother says, it is destiny; I am going to my room. I want no dinner; don't let them worry me, or worry about me."

Sitting alone she faced the circumstances she had evoked, considered them in every light, and came to a conclusion as to her future:

"I will go to London, and make no fuss about it," she decided; "here I should miss Ernest wherever I went; miss him in every way, and people would make me feel he was absent. I have been a great trouble and expense to grandfather and grandmother. I dare say they will be glad to be quiet and alone again. I don't know much about father—he has always been generous with money—but I wonder if he cared much for me! He sent me away, first to nurses, then to school; I saw little of him, but I can make him care. As for Madame, my step-

mother, I shall not let her annoy me. And there will be Mrs. Gordon for a refuge, if I need one. She has always been good to me, and I will see her at once. I cannot help understanding that I am come to the end of this road; but there are many roads in life, and from this moment, I am on the way to London."

Evidently it was destiny, for there was never a let or hinderance in all her preparations. The Gordons took her as a godsend, and all her arrangements went without a hitch. And when it was known she was absolutely going away from New York there was a great access of kindness toward her. The young women she had known—and not always pleasantly—brought her good-bye mementoes; books to read on the voyage, book-marks of their own working, little bags and cases of various kinds for toilet needs, and needlework; and all were given with a conspicuous intention of apology for past offense and conciliation for any future intercourse.

Maria valued it pretty accurately. "It is far better than ill-will," she said to her grandmother; "but I dare say they think I am going home to be married, and as they all look forward to England eventually, they feel that Lady Medway may not be unserviceable in the future."

"Dinna look a gift-horse in the mouth, Maria. Few folks give away anything of real value to themselves. You needna feel under any special obligation for aught but the good will, and that's aye worth having. As for being Lady Medway, there is many a slip between cup and lip, and oceans between you and a' the accidents o' war, and love

not unchangeable in this warld o' change; and there's your father's will that may stand in your road like a wall you can neither win round nor over. I'm real glad at this hour that your grandfather was wise enough to write naething about Lord Medway. You can now tell your ain news, or keep it, whichever seems best to you."

"Do you mean to say, grandmother, that my father has not been told about my engagement to Lord Medway?"

"Just so. At first your grandfather was too ill to write one thing or another; and by the time he was able to hold a pen, we had, baith o' us, come to the conclusion that silence anent the matter was wisdom. It would hae been a hard matter to tell, without telling the whole story, Police Court and young Bradley included, and then there was aye the uncertainty of a man's love and liking to be reckoned with; none o' us could be sure Lord Medway would hold to his promise; he might meet other women to take his heart from you; he might be killed in battle, or in a duel, for it is said he has fought three already; the chances o' the engagement coming to naething were so many on every side we came to the conclusion to leave a' to the future, and I'm sure we did the best thing we could do."

"I am so glad you did it, grandmother. I shall now go home on my own merits. If I win love, it will be because I am Maria Semple, not because I am going to be Lady Medway. And if my engagement was known I should never hear the last of it. I should be questioned about letters—whether they came or not; my stepmother might talk about the

matter; my father insist on a public recognition of my position, and so on. There would be such endless discussions about Lord Medway that I should get weary to even hear his name. And I must bear my fate, whatever it is."

"Nonsense! Parfect nonsense! There is nae such thing as fate. You're in the care and guidance of a wise and loving Creator, and not in thrall to some vague, wandering creature, that you ca' *Fate.* Your ain will is your Fate. Commit your will and way to God, and He will direct your path; and you may snap your thumb and finger at that will o' the wisp—Fate!"

In such conversation over their duties together the three last days were spent, and the girl caught hope and strength from the feeble old woman as they mended and brushed clothing and put it into the trunks standing open in the hall. The Elder wandered silently about. The packing was a mournful thing to him; for, with all her impetuosities and little troublesome ways, Maria was close to his heart, and he feared he had given her the impression that she was in some way a burden. Indeed, he had not felt this, and had only been solicitous that she should obey her father's wishes, and obey them in a loving and dutiful spirit. On the last morning, however, as they rose from the breakfast table, he put even this wise intention behind his anxious love, and drawing her aside he said:

"Maria, my dearie, you will heed your father, of course, in a' things that are your duty—but—but—my dear bairn! I ken my son Alexander is a masterfu' man, and perhaps, it may be, that he might go

beyond his right and your duty. I hae told you to obey him as your father, that's right, but if he is your father, he is my son, and so speaking in that relation, I may say, if my son doesna treat you right, or if he lets that strange English woman treat you wrong, then you are to come back to me—to your auld grandfather—to sort matters between you. And I'll see no one do you wrong, Maria, no one, though it be my auldest son Alexander. You are in my heart, child, and there is always room in my heart for you; and I speak for your grandmother and uncle as well as for mysel'." His voice was low and broken at this point, tears rolled slowly down his cheeks, and he clasped her tenderly in his arms: "God bless you my little lassie! Be strong and of a good courage. Act for the best, and hope for the best, and take bravely whatever comes."

To such wise, tender words she set her face eastward, and the Elder and Neil watched the vessel far down the river, while in her silent home Madame slowly and tearfully put her household in order. Fortunately, the day was sunny and the Spring air full of life and hope, and as soon as they turned homeward, the Elder began to talk of the possibility of Maria's return:

"If she isna happy, I hae told her to come back to us," he said to Neil, and then added: "Your brother is sometimes gey ill to live wi', and the bit lassie has had, maybe, too much o' her ain way here," and Neil wondered at the brave old man; he spoke as if his love would always be present and always sufficient. He spoke like a young man, and yet he was so visibly aging. But Neil had forgotten at the moment that

the moral nature is inaccessible to Time; that though the physical man grows old, the moral man is eternally young.

Not long after the departure of Maria, Neil was one morning sorting and auditing some papers regarding the affairs of Madame Jacobus. Suddenly the thought of Agnes Bradley came to him with such intense clarity and sweetness that his hands dropped the paper they held; he remained motionless, and in that pause had a mental vision of the girl, while her sweet voice filled the chambers of his spiritual ears with melody. As he sat still, seeing and listening, a faint, dreamy smile brightened his face, and Madame softly opening the door, stood a moment and looked at him. Then advancing, the sound of her rustling silk garments brought Neil out of his happy trance, and he turned toward her.

"Dreaming of St. Agnes?" she asked, and he answered, "I believe I was Madame."

"Sometimes dreams come true," she continued. "Can you go to Philadelphia for me? Here is an offer from Gouverneur Morris for my property on Market Street. He proposes to turn the first floor into storage room. At present it is a rather handsome residence, and I am not sure the price he offers will warrant me making the change."

Neil was "ready to leave at any time," he said, and Madame added, "Then go at once. If it is a good offer, it will not wait on our leisure."

He began to lock away the papers under his hands, and Madame watched him with a pleasant smile. As he rose she asked, "Have you heard anything yet from Miss Bradley?"

"Not a word."

"Do you know where she is?"

"I have not the least idea. I think the Hurds know, but they will not tell me."

"I will tell you then. Agnes is in Philadelphia."

"Madame! Madame! I——"

"I am sure of it. On this slip of paper you will find her address. She boards with a Quaker family called Wakefield—a mother and four daughters; the father and brothers are with the American army. I suppose you can leave to-day?"

"In two hours I will be on the road. I need but a change of clothing and a good horse."

"The horse is waiting you in my stables. Choose which animal you wish, and have it saddled: and better mount here; you can ride to Semple house quicker than you can walk."

Neil's face spoke his thanks. He waited for no explanations, he was going to see Agnes; Madame had given him her address, it was not worth while asking how she had procured it. But as he left the room he lifted Madame's hand and kissed it, and in that act imparted so much of his feeling and his gratitude that there was no necessity for words.

"Poor fellow!" sighed Madame, and then she walked to the window and looked sadly into Broadway. "Soldiers instead of citizens," she murmured, "war horses instead of wagon horses; that screaming fife! that braying, blustering drum! Oh, how I wish the kings of earth would fight their own battles! Wouldn't the duello between George of England and George of America be worth seeing?

Lord! I would give ten years of my life for the sight."

With the smile of triumph on her face she turned to see Neil re-entering the room. "Madame," he said, "I must have appeared selfishly ungrateful. My heart was too full for speech."

"I know, I know, Neil. I have been suffering lately the same cruel pain as yourself. I have not heard from Captain Jacobus for nearly a year. Something, I fear, is wrong; he takes so many risks."

"He is sailing as an American privateer. If he had been captured by the English, we should have heard of the capture."

"That is not all. I will tell you just what Jacobus would do, as soon as he was fairly out at sea, he would call his men together on deck, and pointing to the British colors, would say something like this: 'Men, I don't like that bunting, and I'm going to change it for the flag of our own country. If there is any one here that doesn't like the American flag, he can leave the ship in any way he chooses,' then down would go the British flag, and up, with rattling cheers, the American. So far he would be only in ordinary danger, but that is never enough for Jacobus; he would continue after this extraordinary fashion: 'Men, you have all heard of these French and Spanish alliances. As the son of a hundred thousand Dutchmen, I hate the Spaniards, and I'm going to fight and sink every Spanish ship I meet. *Allies!* To the deep sea with such allies! We want no Spanish allies; we want their ships though,

and we'll take them wherever on the wide ocean we can find them.' Then he would put his hand on his first mate's shoulder and continue, 'Here's Jack Tyler, an Englishman from beard to boots, born in the city of London, and there's more on board like him. What does an Englishman want with Frenchmen? Nothing, only to fight them, and that we'll do wherever we meet them! And as for English ships coming our way, they're out of their course, and we'll have to give them a lesson they'll remember. So then, all of you, keep your eyes open for English, French, or Spanish sails. Nothing but American colors in American waters, and American water rolls round the world, as I take it.' So you see, Neil, Jacobus would always have a threefold enemy to fight, and I have not a doubt that was his first thought when he heard of our alliance with France and Spain. And though we might hear of his capture by a British vessel, it is not likely we should do so if he fell into the hands of a French or Spanish privateer. When you come from Philadelphia we will consider this circumstance; but now, good-bye, and good fortune go with you."

It did not take Neil long to go to the Semple house and obtain a change of clothing, and after this short delay nothing interfered with the prosperous course of his journey. The weather was delightful, and his heart so full of hope that he felt no fatigue. And he had such confidence in all Madame Jacobus said, or did, that no doubts as to finding Agnes troubled him. It was, however, too late in the evening of the day on which he reached Philadelphia, to make a call, and he contented himself with locating

the house to which he had been directed. He found it in a quiet street, a small brick house, with white wooden shutters, and a tiny plot of garden in front. No sign of light or life appeared, and after walking a while in front of it, he returned to his inn and tried to sleep.

But he was not very successful. His hopes and his fears kept him waking. He fancied the house he had been directed to looked too silent and dark to be occupied; he longed for the daylight to come that he might settle this fear; and then the possibility of its reality made him sick with anxiety and suspense, holding a measure of hope, seemed better than certain disappointment. In the morning his rigid, upright business instinct asserted itself, and he felt that he must first attend to those affairs which were the ostensible reason of his journey. So it was the early afternoon before he was at liberty to gratify the hunger of his heart.

Happily, when he reached the house indicated, there were many signs of its occupancy; the windows were open, and he saw a young woman sitting near one of them, knitting. His knock was answered by her. He heard her move her chair and come leisurely toward the door, which she opened with the knitting in her hand, and a smile on her face.

"Does Mr. Wakefield live here?" he asked.

"This is his house, but he is not at home now."

"I was told that Miss Bradley of New York was staying here."

"She is here. Does thee want to see her?"

A great weight rolled from Neil's heart. "Yes,"

he answered, "will you tell her that Mr. Neil Semple of New York desires to speak with her."

She bowed her head, and then took him into a small darkened parlor. He was glad the light was dim; he had a feeling that he looked worse than he had ever looked in all his life. He knew that he was pale and trembling with a score of fears and doubts, and the short five minutes of suspense seemed to him a long hour of uncertain apprehensions. Yet it was barely five minutes ere he heard Agnes coming down the stairs, and her steps were quick and eager; and he took courage from the welcoming sound in them, and as the door opened, went with open arms to meet her. He held her in his embrace, her cheek was against his cheek—what need was there for speech? Both indeed felt what they had no power to express, for as all know who have lived and loved, there is in the heart feelings yet dumb; chambers of thought which need the key of new words to unlock them. Still, in that heavenly silence all was said that each heart longed for, and when at length they sat down hand in hand and began to talk, it was of the ordinary affairs of the individual lives dear to them.

Neil's first inquiry concerned John Bradley and his son, and he was glad to notice the proud pleasure with which Agnes answered him. "My father is now in his proper place," she said, "and I have never seen him so well and so happy."

"Is he under arms?"

"Not unless there is fighting on hand; but he is in camp, and all day he is busy mending the accoutrements of the soldiers. At night he sings to them as

they sit round the camp fires, or he holds a prayer meeting, or he reads the Bible; and every Sunday he preaches twice. St. Paul made tents, and as he stitched found time to preach Jesus Christ crucified; my father mends saddles and bridles, and does the same thing, and he is happy, oh, so happy! What is better still, he makes the men around him happy and hopeful, and that is a great thing to do, when they are hungry, and naked, and without pay. Sometimes, when the camp is very bare and hungry, he takes his implements and goes to the outlying farms, mends all their leather, and begs in return corn, and flour, and meat for the men. He never fails in getting some relief; and often he has so moved the poor farmers that they have filled a wagon with food and driven it to the perishing soldiers."

"And Harry? Where is he?"

"With the greatest and best of men. He is now a regular soldier in Washington's own regiment."

"I am glad, and my dear one, are you happy here?"

"As I can be, out of my own home. There are six women in this house; all the men are at the war; some at Morristown; some are gone South. We spend our time in knitting stockings for the soldiers, or in any needlework likely to be of service. But how is Maria? Tell me about her. I thought you might have brought me a letter."

"Maria is on her way to England. Her father has married again. He has obtained an excellent place in the government and furnished a home in London. Naturally, he desired Maria to join him

at once. You know that she is engaged to Lord Medway?"

"No. Poor Harry! He still dreams that Maria is faithful to him. I think she might have given Harry one year's remembrance."

"What did she tell you about Harry in your last interview?"

"Nothing. She was more fretful and unreasonable than I ever before saw her. She could only cry and make reproaches; we parted in sorrow, and I fear in misunderstanding."

"Yes, if you do not know the price paid for your brother's life."

"The price paid! What do you mean, Neil?"

"The night Harry was condemned to death Lord Medway came to see Maria. He told her he would save Harry's life, if she would marry him. He would listen to no compromise, and she accepted the terms. It was a decision bitter as death at the time, but she has learned to love Medway."

Agnes did not appear to listen, she was occupied with the one thought that Maria had been the saviour of her brother.

"It seems incredible," she said at length; "why did she not tell me that last—last time I saw her. It would have changed everything. Oh, Maria! Maria! how I have misjudged you!"

"You had better tell Harry, and be very positive, there is really not a shadow of hope for him. Maria *had* to forget; it was her first duty."

Neil spent nearly three days with his beloved, and then they had to part. But this parting was full of

hope, full of happy plans for the future, full of promises in all directions. In those three days Neil forgot all the sorrowful weeks of his despairing love. As a dream when one awaketh, they slipped even from his memory. For Agnes was loving and faithful, a steady hand to hold, and a steady heart to trust. And oh, she was so lovely and desirable! As he rode joyfully home, he could think of nothing but Agnes; of her eyes, gray as mountain lakes and full of light and shadow; of her smile, that filled even silence with content; her white arms, her brown hair, the warm pallor of her cheeks catching a rosy glow from the pink dimity she wore! Oh, how perfect she was! Beauty! Love! Fidelity! all in one exquisite woman, and that one woman loved him!

Ah, well! Love wakes men once in a lifetime, and some give thanks and rejoice, and some neglect and betray; but either way, love, and their childhood's unheeded dream

Is all the light, of all their day.

CHAPTER XI.

THE QUESTION OF MARRIAGE.

MARIA reached London in the early days of June. Her voyage had been uneventful, and though long, not unpleasant. Still she was glad to feel the earth beneath her feet, and the stir of trafficking humanity around her. They landed late in the afternoon and she remained with the Gordons all night, but early the following morning the colonel took her to Bloomsbury. Mr. Semple's house was not difficult to find; it was the largest in the fine square, an imposing mansion of red brick with a wide flight of stone steps leading to its main entrance. This entrance impressed Maria very much. It was so ample and so handsome.

"I think, indeed, said the Colonel to her, "two sedan chairs could easily be taken in, or out, at the same time."

Her welcome, if not effusive, was full of kindness and interest; she was brought at once to the sunny parlor at the back of the house where her father and stepmother were breakfasting, and nothing could have been more properly affectionate than the latter's greeting. And although she had breakfasted with the Gordons, she found it pleasant enough to sit down beside her father and talk of the voyage

and the war, and the conditions of life in America. He was obviously both astonished and delighted with his daughter; her beauty was so great, her manner so charming, her conversation so full of clever observations, that he felt her to be a personal credit. "There are very few young girls so perfectly formed, so admirably finished," he said to himself; and he rose and walked loftily about the room, proudly aware of the piquant loveliness and intelligence of the girl who called him father. The word sounded well in his ears, and even touched his heart; and she herself was a crowning grace to his splendid habitation. And for her, and for all her beauties and graces and accomplishments, he took the entire credit. She was his daughter, as much his property as his wife, or his house, or his purse.

This appropriation of herself did not then displease Maria. She was longing to be loved, longing to be cared for and protected. And she loved her father, and felt that she could easily love him a great deal more. His appearance invited this feeling. He was a strikingly handsome man, though touching fifty years of age, tall and erect like her grandfather, but with a manner much more haughty and dictatorial. He was dressed in a dark blue cloth coat lined with white satin and ornamented with large gilt buttons; his long vest and breeches were of black satin, his stockings of black silk, and his low shoes clasped with gold latches. He wore his own hair combed back from his large ruddy face and tied behind with a black ribbon.

His new wife was very suitable to him. She was thirty-eight years old and distinctly handsome, tall

and fair, rather highly colored, and dressed with great care in a morning robe of Indian silk. She was very cheerful and composed, had fine health, lived in the unruffled atmosphere of her interests, and had no nerves worth speaking of—a nice woman apparently, who would always behave as nice women were then taught to behave. And yet there were within her elements much at variance with that habitual subservience she showed her husband. Maria was not long in discovering that, though she spoke little and never boasted, she got all she wished to get and did all she wished to do.

After Mr. Semple had gone to business she took Maria to the rooms prepared for her. They were light and airy and prettily furnished, and Mrs. Semple pointed out particularly the little sitting-room attached. It contained a small library of books which are now classic, a spinnet for practice, maps and globes, and a convenient desk furnished with all the necessary implements for writing or correspondence.

Maria had fully resolved not to be forced into any kind of study, but as she stood listening to her stepmother's plans and explanations she changed her mind. She resolved rather to insist on the finest teachers London could furnish. She would perfect herself in music and singing; she would enlarge her knowledge and accomplishments in every direction, and all this that she might astonish and please Lord Medway when he came for her. That he would do so she never doubted; and he could not doubt *her* love when he saw and heard what she had done to make herself more worthy of him.

But this incitement she kept to herself. She permitted her father and stepmother to believe that the fulfilling of their desires was her sole motive, and this beautiful obedience gave her much liberty in other directions. So the weeks and months went past very pleasantly. She had an Italian singing master and a French dancing master, Kalkbrenner gave her music lessons, Madame Jermyn taught her embroidery and lace, and two hours every day were spent in the study of history and geography, and her much neglected grammar. It was all pleasant enough; every master or mistress brought in a fresh element, a little gossip, a different glimpse of the great city in which they all lived. And the preparation of her studies and the practice of her music gave her almost unbounded control of her time. If things were not agreeable down stairs her study was a safe retreat, and she began to take off their shelves the books provided for her amusement and instruction, and to make friends of them and become familiar with their thoughts and opinions.

The evenings were often spent at the theatre or opera, and still more frequently at Vauxhall or Ranelagh gardens, and at the latter places she was always sure of a personal triumph. Her beauty was so remarkable and so admirably set off by her generally fine toilets that she quickly became a noted visitor. Sir Horace Walpole had called her on one occasion "The American Beauty," and the sobriquet clung like a perfume to her. When the Semples had a box and a supper in the rotunda the most noble and fashionable of the young bloods hung round it, paraded past it, or when possible took a box

in such close proximity that their toasts to "The Divine American" could be distinctly or indistinctly heard. Both Mr. and Mrs. Semple were proud of this notoriety. It was quite in keeping with the social *élat* of the age that every glass should be raised when they entered their box at the theatre or opera; quite honorable and flattering to walk between the admiring beaux who watched their entry into the gardens. Maria gave them distinction, exhilarating notice and attention. She was spoken of in the papers as "the lovely Miss Semple, the beautiful daughter of our new collector," and her *début* at the next spring functions of the Court was confidently predicted.

The break in this generally agreeable life came, of course, through a man's selfish desires, dignified with the name of love. Mrs. Semple had a cousin who was largely engaged in the Mediterranean trade —then entirely in English hands—and when Maria had been about eighteen months in London he returned to that city after a sojourn in Turkey and the Greek islands of nearly three years. He had been named at intervals to Maria, but his existence had made no impression upon her, and she was astonished on coming to the dinner table one day to meet him there. The instinct of conquest was immediately aroused; she smiled and he was subdued. The man who had snubbed Turkish bashaws and won concessions from piratical beys in Tunis and Algiers was suddenly afraid of a woman. He might have run away, but he did not; he was under a spell, and he went with her to the opera, and became her willing slave thereafter.

Now during her residence in London, Maria had had many admirers; some she had frowned away, some her father had bowed out, but Richard Spencer was a very different man to be reckoned with. He was Mrs. Semple's cousin, and Mrs. Semple was strongly attached to every member of her family. Cousin Richard's suit was advocated, pressed, even insisted upon by her. He was present at every meal and went with them to every entertainment, and the generality of Maria's admirers understood that he was her accepted lover.

In fact, this relationship was speedily assumed by the whole Semple household, and before the man had even had the courage to ask her to be his wife she was made to understand that her marriage to Cousin Richard was a consummation certain and inevitable. Of course she rebelled, treating the supposition at first as an absurdity, and, when this attitude was resented and punished, as an impossibility.

The affair soon became complicated with business relations and important money interests, Mr. Semple becoming a silent partner in the gigantic ventures of the Spencer Company. He had always felt, even in Maria's social triumphs, a proprietary share; she was his daughter, he could give or refuse her society to all who asked it. She had never denied his power to dismiss all the pretenders to her favor that had as yet asked it. He considered himself to have an equal right to grant her hand to the suitor he thought proper for her.

And as his interests became more and more associated with Mr. Spencer's he became more and more positive in Mr. Spencer's favor. There was little

need then for Mrs. Semple's diplomacies. He had "taken the matter in his own hands" he said, "and he should carry it through."

For some time Maria did not really believe that her father and stepmother were in earnest, but on her twentieth birthday the position was made painfully clear, for when she came to the breakfast table her father kissed her, an unusual token of affection, and put into her hand an order on his banker for a large sum of money.

"It is for your wedding clothes, Maria," he said, "and I wish you to have the richest and best of everything. Such jewels as I think necessary I will buy for you myself. Our relatives and friends will dine with you to-day and I shall announce your engagement."

"But father!" she exclaimed, "I do not want to marry. Let me return this money. Indeed, I cannot spend it for wedding clothes. The idea is so absurd! I do not want to marry."

"Maria, you are twenty years old this twenty-fifth of November. It is time you settled yourself. Mr. Spencer will have his new house ready by the end of next June. As nearly as I can tell, your marriage to him will take place on the twenty-ninth of June. Your mother thinks that with the help of needlewomen your clothing can be finished by that time."

"I told Mr. Spencer a month ago that I would not marry him."

"All right; girls always say such things. It appears modest, and you have a certain privilege in this respect. But I advise you not to carry such pretty affectations too far."

"Father, I do not love Mr. Spencer."

"He loves you, that is the necessary point. It is not proper, it is not requisite that a girl should take love into her consideration. I have chosen for you a good husband, a man who will probably be Lord Mayor of London within a few years, and the prospect of such an honor ought to content you."

It is difficult for an American girl at this time to conceive of the situaton of the daughters of England in the year 1782. The law gave them absolutely into their father's power until they were twenty-one years old; and the law was stupendously strengthened and upheld by universal public approval, and by barriers of social limitations that few women had the daring to cross. Maria was environed by influences that all made for her total subjection to her parent's will, and at this time she ventured no further remark. But her whole nature was insurgent, and she mentally promised herself that neither on the twenty-ninth of June nor on any other day that followed it would she marry Richard Spencer.

After breakfast she went to her room to consider her position, and no one prevented her withdrawal.

"It is the best thing she can do," said Mr. Semple to his wife. "A little reflection will show her the hopeless folly of resistance to my commands."

"Her behavior is not flattering to Richard."

"Richard has more sense than to notice it. He said to me that 'there was always a little chaffering before a good bargain.' He understands women."

"Maria has been brought up badly. She has dangerous ideas about the claims and privileges and personal rights of women."

"Balderdash! Claims of women, indeed! Give them the least power, and they would stake the world away for a whim. See that she dresses herself properly for dinner. I have told her I shall then announce her engagement, and in the midst of all our relatives and friends she will not dare to deny it."

In a great measure Mr. Semple was correct. Maria was not ready to deny it, nor did she think the relatives and friends had anything to do with her private affairs. She made no answer whatever to her father's notice of her approaching marriage, and the congratulations of the company fell upon her consciousness like snowflakes upon a stone wall. They meant nothing at all to her.

The day following Mrs. Semple went to buy the lawn and linen and lace necessary for the wedding garments. Maria would not accompany her; her stepmother complained and Maria was severely reprimanded, and for a few days thoroughly frightened. But a constant succession of such scenes blunted her sense of fear. She remembered her grandfather's brave words, "Be strong and of good courage," and gradually gathered herself together for the struggle she saw to be inevitable. To break her promise to Lord Medway! That was a thing she never would do! No, not even the law of England should make her utter words false to every true feeling she had. And day by day this resolve grew stronger, as day by day it was confronted by a trial she hardly dared to contemplate.

There was no one to whom she could go for advice or sympathy. Mrs. Gordon was in Scotland, where her husband had an estate, and she had no other inti-

mate friend. But at the worst, it was only another year and then she would be her own mistress and Ernest Medway would come and marry her. Of this result she never had one doubt. True, she heard very little from him; but if not one word had come to assure her she would still have been confident that he would keep his word, if alive to do so. Letter-writing was not then the easily practised relief it is now, and she knew Lord Medway disliked it. Yet she was not without even these evidences of his remembrance, and considering the conditions of the country in which they had been written, the great distance between them, the difficulty of getting letters to New York and the uncertainty of getting letters from New York to England, these evidences of his affection had been fairly numerous. All of them had come enclosed in her Uncle Neil's letters, and without mention or explanation, for Neil was sympathetically cautious and did not know what effect they might have on the life of Maria, though he did not know *his* letters were sure to be inquired after and read by her parents.

They were intensely symbolic of a man who preferred to *do* rather than to *say,* and are fairly represented by the three quoted:

"SWEETEST MARIA: Have you forgiven your adoring lover?

ERNEST."

"MY LITTLE DARLING: I have been wounded. I have been ill with fever; but no pain is like the pain of living away from you.

ERNEST."

"STAR OF MY LIFE: I have counted the days until the twenty-fifth of November; they are two hundred and fifty-five. Every day I come nearer to you, my adorable Maria.

ERNEST."

This last letter was dated March the fourteenth, and with it lying next her heart, was it likely she would consent to or even be compelled to marry Richard Spencer? She smiled a positive denial of such a supposition. But for all that, the preparations went on with a stubborn persistence that would have dismayed a weaker spirit. The plans for furnishing the Spencer house, the patterns of the table silver, all the little items of the new life proposed for her were as a matter of duty submitted to her taste or judgment. She was always stolidly indifferent, and her answer was invariably the same, "I do not care. It is nothing to me." Then Mr. Semple would answer with cold authority, "You have excellent taste, Elizabeth. Make the selection you think best for Maria."

Mr. Spencer's method was entirely different. He treated Maria's apathetic unconcern with constant good nature, pretended to believe it maidenly modesty, and under all circumstances refused to understand or appropriate her evident dislike. But his cousin saw the angry sparkle in his black eyes, and to her he had once permitted himself to say, "I am bearing *now,* Elizabeth. When she is Mrs. Spencer it will be her turn to bear." And Elizabeth did not think it necessary to repeat the veiled threat to Maria's father.

Medway's last letter, dated March the fourteenth, did not reach Maria until May the first. On the morning of that day she had been told by Mrs. Semple to dress and accompany her to Bond Street.

"We are going to choose your wedding dress," she said, "and I do hope, Maria, you will take some interest in it. I have spoken to Madame Delamy about the fashion and trimmings, and your father says I am to spare no expense."

"I will not have anything to do in choosing a wedding dress. I will not wear it if it is made."

"I think it is high time you stopped such outrageous insults to your intended husband, your father and myself. I am astonished your father endures them. Many parents would consider you insane and put you under restraint."

"I can hardly be under greater restraint," answered Maria calmly, but there was a cold, sick terror at her heart. Nevertheless she refused to take any part in the choosing of the wedding dress, and Mrs. Semple went alone to make the selection.

But Maria was at last afraid. "Under restraint!" She could not get the words out of her consciousness. Surely her dear grandfather had had some prescience of this grave dilemma when he told her if she was not treated right to come back to him. But how was she to manage a return to New York? Women then did not travel, could not travel, alone. No ships would take her without companions or authority. She did not know the first of the many steps necessary, she had no money. She was, in fact, quite in the position of a little child left to its own helplessness in a great city. The Gordons would be likely to

come to London before the winter, but until then she could find neither ways nor means for a return to New York. All she could do was to take day by day the steps that circumstances rendered imperative.

The buying of the wedding dress brought things so terribly close to her that she finally resolved to tell her father and stepmother of her engagement to Lord Medway. "I will take the first opportunity," she said to herself, and the opportunity came that night. Mr. Spencer was not present. They dined alone, and Mr. Semple was indulging one of those tempers which made him, as his father had said to Neil, "gey ill to live with." He had been told of Maria's behavior about the wedding dress, and the thundery aspect of his countenance during the meal found speech as soon as the table was cleared and they were alone. He turned almost savagely to his daughter and asked in a voice of low intensity:

"What do you mean, Miss, by your perverse temper? Why did you not go with your mother to choose your wedding dress?"

"Because it is not my wedding dress, sir. I have told you for many weeks that I will not marry Mr. Spencer;" then with a sudden access of courage, "*and I will not.* I am the promised wife of Lord Medway."

Mr. Semple laughed, and then asked scornfully, "And pray, who is Lord Medway?"

"He is my lover; my husband on the twenty-ninth of next November."

All the passion and pride of a lifetime glowed in the girl's face. Her voice was clear and firm, and at that hour she was not a bit afraid. "I will tell you

about him," she continued, and her attitude had in those few minutes so far dominated her audience that she obtained the hearing she might otherwise not have gained. Rapidly, but with singular dramatic power, she related the story of her life in New York —her friendship with Agnes Bradley, the attraction between herself and Harry Bradley, his arrest, trial and death sentence, Lord Medway's interference and her own engagement, her subsequent intimacy with the man she had promised to marry, and the love which had sprung up in her heart for him."

"And I will not break my word, not a letter of it," she said in conclusion.

"If there was any truth in this story," answered her father, "who cares for a woman's promises in love matters? They are not worth the breath that made them."

"My promise to Lord Medway, father, rests on my honor. I could give him no security but my word. I must keep my word."

"A woman's honor! A woman's word to a lover! Pshaw! Let us hear no more of such rant. What do you think of this extraordinary story, Elizabeth?"

"I think it is a dream, a fabrication. Maria has imagined it. Who knows Lord Medway? I never heard tell of such a person.

"Nevertheless, he will come for me on the twenty-fifth of November," said Maria.

"Long before that time you will be Mrs. Richard Spencer," answered her father.

"I declare to you, father, I will not. You may carry me to the altar, that is as far as you can go;

you cannot make me speak. I will not say one word that makes me Richard Spencer's wife. I entreat you not to force such a trial on me. It will make me the town's talk, you also."

"Do not dare to consider me as a part of such a mad scene. Go to your room at once, before I— before I make you."

She fled before his passion, and terrified and breathless locked the door upon her sorrow. But she was not conquered. In fact, her resolution had gained an invincible strength by the mere fact of its utterance. Words had given it substance, form, even life, and she felt that now she would give her own life rather than relinquish her resolve.

In reality her confidence did her case no good. Mr. Semple easily adopted the opinion of his wife that Maria had invented the story to defer what she could not break off. "And you know, Alexander," she added, "those Gordons will be back before the date she has fixed this pretended lover to appear, and in my opinion they are capable of encouraging Maria to all lengths against your lawful authority. As for myself, I am sure Mrs. Gordon disliked me on sight, I know I disliked her, and Maria was rebellious the whole time they were in London. I wonder Richard does not break off the wedding, late as it is."

"I should not permit him to do so, even if he felt inclined. But he is as resolute as myself. Why, Elizabeth, we two men should be the laughing-stock of the town for a twelvemonth if we allowed a chit of a girl to master us. It is unthinkable. Go on with the necessary preparations. The Spencers liv-

ing in Durham and in Kendal must be notified at once. The greater the company present the more impossible it will be for her to carry out her absurd threat. And even if she will not speak, silence gives consent. I shall tell the clergyman to proceed."

After this there were no more pretenses of any kind. Maria's reluctance to her marriage was openly acknowledged to the household, and her disobedience complained of and regretted. Among the two men-servants and three maids there was not one who sympathized with her. The men were married and had daughters, from whom they expected implicit obedience. The women wondered what the young mistress wanted: "A man with such black eyes and nice, curly hair," said the cook, "any proper girl would like; so free with his jokes and his money, too; six foot tall, and well set up as ever I saw a man. And the fine house he is giving her, and the fine things of all kinds he sends her! Oh, she's a proud, set-up little thing as ever came my way!" These remarks and many more of the same kind from the powers in the kitchen indicated the sentiment of the whole house, and Maria felt the spirit of opposition to her, though it was not expressed.

She could only endure it and affect not to notice what was beyond her power to prevent. But she wrote to her Uncle Neil and desired him to see Lord Medway and tell him exactly how she was situated. In this letter she declared in the most positive manner her resolve not to marry Mr. Spencer, and described the uneasiness which her stepmother's remark about "restraint" had caused her. And this

letter, with one to Mrs. Gordon, were the only outside influences she had any power to reach.

At length the twenty-eighth day of June arrived. The Spencer house was filled with relatives from the Northern and Midland countries, and in Maria's home the wedding feast was already prepared. A huge wedding cake was standing on the sideboard, and in the middle of the afternoon her wedding dress came home. Mrs. Semple brought it herself to Maria and spread out its shimmering widths of heavy white satin and the costly lace to be worn with it.

"It is sure to fit you, Maria," she said. "Madame Delamy made it from your gray cloth dress, which you know is perfect every way. Will you try it on? I will help you."

"No, thank you. I would as willingly try my shroud on."

"I think you are very selfish and unkind. You know that I am not well; indeed, I feel scarcely able to bear the fatigue of the ceremony, and you are turning what ought to be a pleasure to your father and every one else into a fear and a weariness."

She did not answer her stepmother, but in the hurry of preparations going on down stairs she sought her father and found him resting in the freshly decorated drawing-room. He was sitting with closed eyes and evidently trying to sleep. She stood a little way from him, and with many bitter tears made her final appeal. "Say I am ill, father, for indeed I am, and stop this useless preparation. It is all for disappointment and sorrow."

He listened without denial or interruption to her

words, but when she ceased in a passion of weeping he answered, "There is no turning back and there is no delay, Maria. You are very silly to cry over the inevitable, especially when both my love and wisdom decide that the inevitable is good for you. You will certainly be married to Richard Spencer to-morrow morning. Prepare yourself for ten o'clock. I shall come to your study for you at five minutes before ten. At nine o'clock Madame Delamy will send two women to arrange your dress. See that you are ready in time. Good night."

There was nothing now to be done in the way of prevention, and a dull, sullen anger took the place of entreaty in Maria's mind. "If they will set my back to the wall, they shall see I can fight," she thought, as she wretchedly took her way to her room. The beauteous gown was shining on her bed, and she passionately tossed it aside and lay down and fell asleep. When she awoke it was morning, a gusty, rainy morning with glints of sunshine between the showers. She was greatly depressed, and not a little frightened. What she had to do she determined to do, but oh! what would come after it? Then she was shocked to find that the scene she was resolved to enact, though gone over so often in her mind, slipped away from her consciousness whenever she tried to recall or arrange it. For a few minutes she was in a mood to be driven against her will, and she fully realized this condition. "I must be strong and of good courage," she whispered. "I must cease thinking and planning. I must leave this thing to be done till the moment comes to do it. I am only wasting my strength."

Fortunately, she was continually interrupted. Coffee was sent to her room. Then the hairdresser arrived, and the women to robe her for the ceremony. She was quite passive in their hands, and when her father appeared, ready to answer his "Come, Maria."

The parlors were crowded with the Spencers and their friends, and congratulations sounded fitfully in her ears as carriage after carriage rolled away to St. Margaret's Church. Mr. Semple and Maria were in the last coach, and his wife and the bridegroom in the one immediately before them. So that when they arrived at the church, the company were already grouped around the communion railing.

Maria felt like a soul in a bad dream; she was just aware when she left the carriage that it was raining heavily, and that her father took her arm and sharply bid her to "lift her wedding dress from the plashy pavement." She made a motion with her hand, but failed to grasp it, and then she was walking up the gloomy aisle, she was at the rail, the clergyman was standing before her, the bridegroom at her side, the company all about her. There was prayer, and she felt the pressure of her father's hand force her to her knees; and then there was a constant murmur of voices, and a spell like that which held her during her last interview with Lord Medway was upon her. But suddenly she remembered this fateful apathy, and the memory was like movement in a nightmare. The instant she recognized it the influence was broken and she was almost painfully conscious of Richard Spencer's affirmative:

"I will."

She knew then what was coming and what she had to do, and those who watched her saw the girl lift herself erect and listen to the priest asking those solemnly momentous questions which were to bind her forever to obey Richard Spencer, to love and honor him, and in sickness and health, forsaking all others, keep unto him as long as she lived. She had but to say two words and her promise would be broken, her lover lost and her life made wretched beyond hope.

"But I will never say them!" and this passionate assurance to her soul gave her all the strength she needed. When the clergyman stopped speaking she looked straight into his face and in a voice low, but perfectly distinct, answered:

"I will not."

There was a moment's startled pause. Her father's voice broke it:

"Go on, sir."

But before this was possible Maria continued:

"I am the promised wife of another man. I do not love this man. I will not marry him."

Her eyes, full of pitiful entreaty, held the clergyman's eyes. He looked steadily at the company and said, "God's law and the laws of this realm forbid this marriage until such time as the truth of this allegation be tried." And with these words he walked to the altar, laid the Book of Common Prayer upon it, and then disappeared in the vesty.

Before he did so, however, there was a shrill, sharp cry of mortal pain, and Mrs. Semple was barely saved by her husband's promptitude from falling prone on the marble aisle before the chancel.

Immediately all was confusion. The sick woman was carried insensible to her coach. Mr. Spencer took his sobbing sister on his arm, and the guests broke up into couples. With hurrying feet, amazed, ashamed, all talking together, they sought the vehicles that were to carry them away from a scene so painful and so unexpected. Maria sat down in the nearest pew and waited to see what would happen. She heard carriage after carriage roll away, and then realized that every one had deserted her.

In about twenty minutes the sexton began to close the church, and she asked him, "Has nobody waited for me?"

"No, miss, you be here alone." Then she took a ring from her finger and offered it to him: "Get me a closed carriage and I will give you this ring," she said, but he answered:

"Nay, I want no ring from a little lass in trouble. I'll get the carriage, and you may drop into the church some better day to pay me."

She went back home in the midst of a thunderstorm. The day was darkened, the rain driven furiously by the wind, and yet when she reached her father's house the front entrance stood open and there was neither men nor women servants in sight. She ran swiftly to her room, locked the door and sank into a chair, spent with fear and sick with apprehension. What had happened? What would be done to her? "Oh, to be back in New York!" she cried. "Nobody there would force a poor girl into misery and make a prayer over it, and a feast about it."

A sudden movement of her head showed her

Maria Semple in her wedding dress. She turned herself quickly from the glass, and with frantic haste unfastened the gown and hung it up. All the trinkets in which they had dressed her were as quickly removed, and she was not satisfied until she had cast off every symbol of the miserably frustrated marriage. But as hour after hour passed and no one came near her she became sick with terror, and she was also faint with hunger and thirst. Something must be ventured, some one must be seen; she felt that she would lose consciousness if she was left alone much longer.

After repeatedly ringing her bell, it was answered by one of the women. "I want some tea, Mary, and some meat and bread. What is the matter with every one?"

"The doctors do say as Mrs. Semple is dying, and the master is like a man out of his mind." The woman spoke with an air of distinct displeasure, if not dislike, but she brought the food and tea to Maria, and without further speech left her to consider what she had been told.

Oh, how long were the gloomy hours of the day! How much longer those of the terrible night! The very atmosphere was full of pain and fear; lights were passing up and down, and footsteps and inarticulate movements, all indicating the great struggle between life and death. And Maria lay dressed upon her bed, sleepless, listening and watching, and seeing always in the dim rushlight that white shimmering gown splashed with rain, and hanging limply by one sleeve. It grew frightful to her,

threatening, uncanny, and she finally tore it angrily down and flung it into a closet.

But the weariest suspense comes to some end finally, and just as dawn broke there was a sudden change. The terror and the suffering were over; peace stole through every room in the house, for a man child was born to the house of Semple.

CHAPTER XII.

LOVE AND VICTORY.

THIS event was in many ways favorable to Maria. She was put aside, nearly forgotten for a month, in the more imminent danger to the household. And by that time the almost brutal passion which in the first hours of shame and distress could think of no equivalent but personal punishment, had become more reasonable. For men and women, if worthy of that name, do not tarry in the Valley of the Shadow of Death without learning much they would learn nowhere else.

Still her position was painful enough. Her father did not speak unless it was necessary to ask her a question, her stepmother for nearly eight weeks remained in her room, and the once obsequious servants hardly troubled themselves to attend to her wants or obey her requests. In the cold isolation of her disgrace she often longed for a more active displeasure. If only the anger against her would come to words she could plead for herself, or at least she could ask to be forgiven.

But Mr. Semple, though ordinarily a passionate and hot-spoken man, was afraid to say or do anything which would disturb the peace necessary for his wife's restoration and his son's health. He felt that it was better for Maria to suffer. She deserved

punishment; they were innocent. Yet, being naturally a just man, he had allowed her such excuse as reflection brought. He had told himself that the girl had never had a mother's care and guidance; that he himself had been too busy making money to instill into her mind the great duty of obedience to his commands. He had considered also that the very atmosphere in which she had lived and moved nearly all the years of her life had been charged with assertion and rebellion. It was the attitude of every one around her to resist authority, even the authority of kings and governors. If she had been brought up in the submissive, self-effacing manner proper to English girls her offense would have been unnatural and unpardonable; but he remembered with a sigh that American women, as a rule, arrogated to themselves power and individuality, which American men, as a rule, did not ask them to surrender. These things he accepted as some palliation of Maria's abnormal misconduct; and also he was not oblivious to the fact that her grandparents had for a year given her great freedom, and that he, for his own convenience, had placed her with her grandparents. Besides which, anger in a good heart burns itself out.

Very slowly, but yet surely, this process was going on, and Maria's attitude was favorable to it, for she was heart-sorry for the circumstances that had compelled her to assert the right of her womanhood, and her pathetic self-effacement was sincere and without reproach. By-the-by the babe came in as peacemaker. As soon as she was permitted to see her stepmother she bent all the sweet magnetism of

her nature to winning, at least, her forgiveness. She carried the fretful child in her arms and softly sung him to sleep, she praised his beauty, she learned to love him, and she made the lonely hours when Mr. Semple was at the office pass pleasantly to the sick woman. Finally one day they came to tears and explanations; the dreadful affair was talked out, Maria entreated forgiveness, and was not ungenerously pardoned.

This was at the close of August, and a few days afterward she received a letter from Mrs. Gordon. "We are in London for the winter," she wrote. "Come, child, and let me see how you look." Rather reluctantly Mrs. Semple permitted her to make the visit. "She is the next thing to an American," she thought, "and she will make Maria unreasonable and disobedient again." But she need not so have feared; the primal obligations of humanity are planted in childhood, and when we are old we are apt to refer to them and judge accordingly.

Mrs. Gordon's first remark was not flattering, for as Maria entered her room she cried out, "La, child! what is the matter with you? You look ill, worried, older than you ought to look. Are you in trouble?"

"Yes, Madame."

"Stepmother?"

"Father."

"Ah! Stepmothers make stepfathers, every one knows that. We shall have a dish of tea and you shall tell me about it. Then I will help you. But one can't build without stone. What has the stepfather done?"

Then Maria told her friend all her trouble, and

was rather chilled in the telling by certain signs of qualified sympathy. And when the story was finished Mrs. Gordon's first remark was yet more disheartening:

"'Tis a common calamity," she said, "and better people than you have endured it."

"But, Madame——"

"Yes, I know what you are going to say. But you must consider first that your father was acting quite within his authority. He had the right to choose your husband."

"I had already chosen my husband."

"Then you ought, when you first came home, to have notified your parents. Sure, you had so much responsibility to fulfill. Why did you not do your duty in this matter?"

"I think I was afraid."

"To be sure you were. Little coward! Pray what did you fear? Ernest Medway?"

"Yes. I thought, perhaps—as I told you, we parted in anger, and I thought perhaps he might not keep his word, there were so many reasons why he might like to break it, and also, in war-time life is uncertain. He has been wounded, sick; he might have died."

"So might you, or I, for that matter. A pretty account you give of yourself. Lord, child! you surely had letters to show your father.

"I had a few, but they were only a line or two. I was sure they would be made fun of, and I was angry, too. I thought if they would not take my word, I would not give vouchers for it. Not I!"

"Don't dash at things in that way, child. Your

father was not bound to believe your story, especially as you did not tell it until he had made all arrangements for your marriage with this Mr. Spencer. Your conduct was too zigzaggery; you should have been straight.

"Father ought to have believed me."

"We have it on good authority that all men are liars, and I daresay that your father has known better people than either you or I to tell lies. Really, I ought to give you a scolding, and this is nothing like it."

"It was such an outrage to force me to the very altar. The consequences were at my father's door."

"Custom, use and wont, take the outrage out of many things. Good gracious, Maria, most of the women I know were in some way or other forced to the altar; good for them, too, and generally they found that out. My own cousin, Lady Clarisse Home, went weeping there; Miss Anne Gordon, a cousin of my husband, refused to get up, said she was ill, and her friends had the marriage at her bedside. 'Tis above or below reason, but these same women adored their husbands within a week's time."

"Oh, dear! what shall I say? What shall I do?"

"Poor little Maria! You come to England, and then are astonished that a girl of eighteen is not allowed to have her own way, even in a husband."

"I have heard that you took your own way in England, Madame."

"In Scotland, there was some difference, and I was twenty-three and had a fortune of my own."

"Tell me then, Madame, what I ought to do."

"I think you ought to go back to New York. You

are unhappy here, and you must make your father's home unhappy. That is not fair. If you are in New York, Ernest Medway will have no difficulty in keeping his word—if he wishes to do so. If he does not keep his word, you will escape the mortification you would certainly feel in your father's house. Ask the stepmother for permission to go back; she will manage the rest."

"Had I not better wait till the twenty-ninth of November has come and gone?"

"If you are a fool, do so. If you are wise, do not give opportunity so much scope. Go at once."

This advice was carried out with all the speed possible. That very night Maria found a good time to ask her stepmother's influence, and in spite of some affected reluctances, she understood that her proposal was one that gave great and unexpected satisfaction. She felt almost that she might begin to prepare for the voyage; nor were her premonitions false. On the third evening after the request her father came to her room to grant it. He said he was "sorry she wished to leave him, but that under the circumstances it was better that she left England, at least for a year. The war is practically over," he continued, "and New York will speedily recover herself." Then he entered into some financial explanations of a very generous character, and finally, taking a small package from his pocket, said:

"Give this to your grandfather. It is a miniature of his grandson, Alexander Semple the third. He will be much delighted to see that child, for he has no other grandson. My brothers' children are only girls."

"Only girls!" The two words cut like a two-edged blade, but they were not said with any unkind intent, though he felt the unkind impression they made, and rose and went slowly toward the door. His manner was hesitating, as if he had forgotten something he wished to say, and the momentary delay gave to Maria a good thought. She followed him quickly, and while his hand was on the door laid hers upon it. "Father," she said, "stay a little while. I want to ask you to forgive me. I have so often been troublesome and self-willed, I have given you so much annoyance, I feel it now. I am sorry for it. I cannot go back to America until you forgive me. Father, will you forgive me? Indeed, I am sorry."

He hesitated a moment, looked into her white, upturned face, and then answered, "I forgive you, Maria. You have caused me great shame and disappointment, but I forgive you."

"Not in that way! Oh, not in that way, father! Kiss me as you used to do. You have not kissed me for nearly a year. Dear father, do not be so cold and so far-off. I am only a little girl, but I am *your* little girl. Perhaps I do not deserve to be forgiven, but for my mother's sake be kind to me."

At these words he turned fully to her, took her hands, and in a low, constrained voice said, "You are a very dear little girl, and we will let all the trouble between us be as if it had never been. We will bury it, forgive it, and forget it evermore. It is not to be spoken of again, not as long as we live."

Then she leaned her head against his breast and

he kissed her as those who love and forgive kiss, and the joy of reconciliation was between them.

"Good night, Maria;" and as he held her close within his arm he added with a laugh, "What a little bit of a woman! How high are you? Maria?"

"Just as high as your heart, father. I don't want to be any higher."

"That is a very pretty speech," and this time he kissed her voluntarily, and with a most tender affection.

Five days after this interview Maria sailed for America. Her father had carefully attended to all things necessary for her safety and comfort, and her stepmother had tried to atone by profuse and handsome gifts for the apparent unkindness which had hastened her departure. But Maria knew herself much to blame, and she was too happy to bear ill will. She was going to see her lover. She was going to give him the assurances which she had so long withheld. She was now impatient to give voice to all the tenderness in her heart.

It was the nineteenth day of September when she sailed, and on the following day, as Mr. Semple was sitting in his office, one of the messengers brought him a card. The light was dim and he looked intently at it, appeared startled, rose and took it to the window for further inspection. "Lord Medway" was certainly the name it bore, and ere he could give any order concerning it the door opened and Lord Medway entered.

Mr. Semple advanced to meet him, and the nobleman took the chair he offered. "Sir," he said,

hardly waiting for the preliminary courtesies, "Sir, I cannot believe myself quite unknown to you. And I hope that you have already some anticipation of the purport of my visit. I come to ask the hand of your daughter Maria in marriage. I have been her devoted lover for more than three years, and now I would make her my wife. I beg you, sir, to examine these papers. They will give you a generally correct idea of my wealth and of the settlement I propose to make in favor of my wife."

Mr. Semple looked at the eager young man with a face so troubled that he was instantly alarmed.

"What is it?" he cried. "Is Maria sick? Married? Sir, do not keep me in suspense."

"Maria must be very near to New York. She sailed three weeks ago."

"Oh, how unfortunate I am! I am indeed distracted at this disappointment."

"Will you come with me to my home? Mrs. Semple will tell you all that you desire to know about Maria."

"I am obliged for your kindness, sir, but there is only one thing for me to do. I must go back to New York by the first opportunity. I have your permission, I trust."

"I have nothing to oppose to your wishes, Lord Medway. Maria has been faithful to your memory, and I have every reason to know that you are dear to her. I wish you both to be happy."

"Then, sir, farewell for the present. If Fate be not most unkind to me, I will return with Lady Medway before the year be fully out."

He seemed to gather hope from his own prophecy,

and with the charming manner he knew well how to assume he left Mr. Semple penetrated with his importance and dignity, and exceedingly exalted in the prospect of his daughter's great fortune.

"I do not wonder that Maria would accept no lover in his place," he said to Mrs. Semple. "I think, Elizabeth, he is the handsomest man I ever saw. And I glanced at the total of his rent-roll; it is close on forty thousand pounds a year, and likely to increase as his mining property is opened up. Maria has done very well for herself."

"Then we have good authority for saying all men will praise her. Nevertheless, Cousin Richard was a handsome man and an excellent match," said Mrs. Semple. "You had better tell Richard. It will close that affair forever."

She was vexed, but not insensible to the social glory of the match. And there was also the precious boy in the cradle. A relative among the nobility would be a good thing for him; and, indeed, the subject opened up on all sides in a manner flattering both to the pride and the interest of the Semples.

They could not cease talking of it until sleep put an end to their hopes and speculations. And in the morning they were so readily excited that Mrs. Semple felt impelled to make a confidante of her nursery maid; and Mr. Semple, being under the same necessity of conversation, was pleased to remember that his wife had advised him to inform Richard Spencer. He told himself that she was right, and that Richard ought to know the reason of his rejection. It would only be proper kindness to let him under-

stand that Maria's reluctance was not a dislike for him personally, but was consequent upon her love for one who had won her heart previous to their acquaintance. That fact altered Richard's position and made it much less humiliating.

So he went to the offices of the Spencer Company, and after some tedious talk on the Zante currant question, he told the rejected man of Lord Medway's visit, described his appearance, and revealed, under a promise of secrecy, the amount of his rent-roll and the settlement proposed for his wife.

The effect of this story was precisely in the line of what Mr. Semple had supposed. The weakness of Richard Spencer's nature was a slavish adoration of the nobility. To have had Lord Medway for a rival was an honor to be fully appreciated; and to the end of his life it supplied him, in all his hours of after-dinner confidences, with a sentimental story he delighted to tell. "Yes, gentlemen," he would say, even when an old man, "Yes, gentlemen, I was once in love, madly in love, with as beautiful a creature as ever trod this earth. And she led me a pretty dance right to the altar steps, and then deserted me. But I cannot blame her. No, by St. George, I cannot! I had a rival, gentlemen, the young, handsome, rich and powerful Lord Medway, a nobleman that sits in the house of Lords and may be of the Privy Council. What hope for poor Dick Spencer against such a rival? None at all, gentlemen, and so you see, for Lord Medway's sake I am a bachelor, and always shall be one. No girl for me, after the divine Maria was lost. I saw her going to the last drawing-room and she smiled at me. I live for such

little favors, and I have reason to know my great rival does not grudge them to me."

And in this way Richard Spencer consoled himself, and was perhaps more reasonably happy than if he had married a reluctant woman and been grieved all the years of his life by her contradictions.

The unexpected return of Maria to her grandparents quite overthrew Lord Medway's plans for a few hours. He had hoped to marry her in London, and take her at once to his town house, which was even then being prepared and adorned for her. And affairs in New York were in such a state of chaos that he was even anxious for her personal safety. He had left everything and every one in a state of miserable transition and uncertainty, and he was sure things were growing worse and would continue to do so until the departure of the hostile army and the return of the patriotic citizens. For it was they, and they only, who had any interest in the preservation of their beautiful city from plunder and destruction.

And as he thought on these things, he reflected that it would be an impossibility to secure for Maria and himself any comfortable passage home, in the ordinary shipping, or even in the ships of war. He was sure every available inch of room would be filled with royalist refugees, and he knew well the likely results of men and women and children crowded together, without sufficient food and water, and exposed to the winter's cold and storm without any preparation for it.

"It will not do, it will not do!" he ejaculated, "whatever it costs, I must charter a vessel for our own use."

In pursuance of this decision, he was in the largest shipping-house very early the next morning, and with its aid, speedily secured a swift sailing clipper. Her long, sharp bow and raking masts, pleased his nautical sense; she was staunchly built, fit to buffet wind and waves, and had a well-seasoned captain, who feared nothing, and was pleased at the terms Lord Medway offered him.

Nearly two weeks were spent in victualing and fitting her for the dainty lady she was to carry. The softest pillows and rugs and carpets, made her small space luxuriously sufficient. Silver and china and fine linen were provided for her table, and when all her lockers had been filled and all her sailing wants provided for, Lord Medway brought on board a good cook, a maid for Maria, and a valet for himself. Then he set sail joyously; surely, at last, he was on the right road to his bridal.

Overtaking Maria was of course beyond a possibility, but he desired to reach New York before its evacuation. He had many reasons for this, but the chief one was a fear that unless he did so, there might be no clergyman in New York to perform the marriage ceremony. Lovers have a thousand anxieties, and if they do not have them, make them; and as the "Dolphin" flew before the wind, Medway walked her deck, wondering if Maria had arrived safely in New York, if her ship had been delayed, if it had been taken by a privateer, if there had been any shipwreck, or even great storms; if by any cruel chance he should reach New York, and not find Maria there. How could he endure the consequent disappointment and anxiety? He trembled, he turned heart-

sick, at any such possibility, and when the green shores of the new world appeared, he almost wished for a little longer suspense; he thought a certainty of Maria's absence would kill him.

As they came nearer to the city it was found impossible to approach any of the usual wharfs. The river was crowded with men-of-war, transports, and vessels of every kind, and after some consideration they took to the North River, and finally anchored in midstream, nearly opposite the house of Madame Jacobus.

The sight of her residence inspired him with something like hope, and he caused the small boat by which he landed to put him on shore as far north of the heart of the city as possible. But even so, he could distinctly hear, and still more distinctly *feel* the sorrowful tumult of the chaotic, almost frantic town. With swift steps and beating heart he reached the Semple house. He stood still a moment and looked at it. In the morning sunshine it had its usual, peaceful, orderly aspect, and as he reached the gate, he saw the Elder open the door, and, oh, sight of heaven! Maria stepped into the garden with him.

What happened then? Let each heart tell itself. We have many words to express grief, none that translate the transports of love that has conquered all the accidents of a contrary fortune. Such joy speaks like a child, two or three words at a time, "My Darling—Oh, Beloved—Sweetest Maria—Ernest—Ernest—At last—At last!"

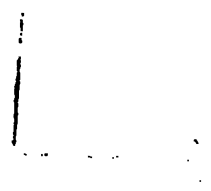
But gradually they came back to the sense of those proprieties that very wisely invade the selfishness of human beings. They remembered there were others

in the world besides themselves, and broke their bliss in two, that they might share it. And as conversation became more general Medway perceived that haste was an imperative necessity, and that even haste might be too late. It was now exceedingly doubtful if a clergyman could be procured. Trinity had no authorized rector, the Reverend Mr. Inglis having resigned the charge on the first of November, just three weeks previously, and the appointment of the Reverend Mr. Moore, selected by the corporation of Trinity, not being yet approved by the Governor of the State of New York. To an Englishman of that day, there was no marriage legally performed but by an accredited Episcopal minister, and this was the obstacle Lord Medway had now to face.

If General Clinton had been still in New York, the chaplain attached to his staff would have been easily available; but Lord Medway knew little of Sir Guy Carleton, then in command, and could only suppose his staff would be similarly provided. As this difficulty demanded instant attention, Medway went immediately about it. He was but barely in time. Sir Guy thought the chaplain had already embarked, but fortunately, he was found in his rooms, in the midst of his packing, and the offer of a large fee made a short delay possible to him. It was then the twentieth of November, and the evacuation of the British troops and refugees was to be completed on the twenty-fifth. There was no time to be lost, for an almost insane terror pervaded the minds of the royalists, and Medway hastened back to Maria to expedite her preparations.

"Only one day, my dear one," he said, "can be

HE CAUSED THE SMALL BOAT TO PUT HIM ON SHORE.



allowed you. You must pack immediately. If your trunks can be sent to Madame Jacobus to-night, I will have the captain of the 'Dolphin' get them on board as early as possible to-morrow. During to-day you must make all your arrangements. The clergyman will be waiting for us in St. Paul's Chapel at nine o'clock in the morning. Will your grandparents go with us to the church?"

"I think not, Ernest. They would rather bid me good-bye in their own home, and it will be better so. Uncle Neil has begged grandfather not to go into the city; he says it would be both dangerous and heart-breaking to him—yet we will ask them."

It was as Maria had supposed; the Elder and Madame preferred to part with their little girl in private. With smiles and tears and blessings, they gave her into Lord Medway's care and then sat down on their lonely hearth to rejoice in her joy and good fortune. They did not, however, talk much; a few words now and then, and long pauses between, in which they wandered back to their own bridal, and the happy, busy days that were gone forever.

"It will be Neil next," said the Elder sadly.

"Yes. The Bradleys will be home on the twenty-seventh. He is set on Agnes Bradley."

"I'm sorry for it."

"She suits him. I know you never liked the family."

"Far awa' from it."

"Neil says the son is to marry Mary Wakefield. Agnes has been with the Wakefields; Mary is the youngest daughter."

"And the saddler will open his shop again?"

"Yes. His son is to be his partner. John Bradley thinks he has a 'call' to preach. He has got the habit of wandering about, working and preaching. Agnes says he will never give it up."

After a long pause the Elder spoke again: "Maria is sure to be happy; she has done well."

"No woman could be happier. Has Neil told you what he is going to do?"

"He canna stay here, Janet. That is beyond thinking of. Any bill of attainder would include him. He is going to Boston to pick up the lines o' his brother's business. Alexander made a fortune there; the name o' Semple is known and respected, and John Curwen, who has plenty o' money, will be in the business with him. He'll do well, no fear o' Neil."

"Then he'll get married."

"To be sure; men are aye eager to meet that trouble."

"Alexander!"

"And speaking o' bills o' attainder, I'll like enough hae my name on one."

"No, you won't. If you'll only bide at hame and keep your whist anent a' public matters, you'll be left alane. If you have enemies, I hae friends—great and powerful friends—and there's our two sons to stand on your right hand and your left. Robert and Allen left a' and followed the American cause from the first. They are good sureties for you. And what of your friend, Joris Van Heemskirk?"

"We'll see, we'll see. He may have changed a deal; he was always fond o' authority, and for eight years he has been giving orders and saying 'go' and

'come' and 'do this.' I took a bit walk down the road yestreen, and I saw that creature Batavius polishing up the brass knocker o' his father-in-law's front door. He had raked the littered garden, and Joanna was putting up clean curtains. And he came waddling down to the gate and said, 'Good-morning, Elder,' and I could but say the same to him. And then he said, 'We are all getting ready for the coming home o' our brave soldiers, and I am satisfied; it is a steady principle of mine to be satisfied with the government. Governor Clinton bowed to me yesterday, and he is the friend of General Washington. I notice these things, for it is my way to notice everything.' And I interrupted him and said, 'Your principles change with your interests, sir,' and he fired up and asked: 'Why not, then? It is a principle of mine to go with the times, for I will not be left behind. I am a sailor, and I know that it is a fool that does not turn his sail with the wind. When the wind blows west I will not sail east;' and I said, 'you will do very well in these times,' and he laughed and answered, '*Ja!* I always do very well. I am known for that everywhere.' So I left him, but the world seems slipping awa' from me, Janet."

"I am at your side, and there's nae bride nor bridegroom o' a day half as much to each other as you are to me and I to you. And if this warld fails, it is not the only warld." And they looked lovingly at each other and were silent and satisfied."

In the meantime the little wedding party had gathered at the alter of St. Paul's Chapel: Neil, who gave away Maria, Madame Jacobus and her friend Counselor Van Ahrens; Lord Medway with Sir Francis

Lauve and his sister Miss Estelle Lauve, members of an English family with whom he had been familiar. The chaplain was waiting when the bride arrived, and the words that made her Lord Medway's wife were solemnly said. There was no music, no flowers, no bells, no theatrical effects of any kind, but the simple, grand words of resignation and consecration had all the serious joy and sacred character of a happy religious rite, and every heart felt that nothing could have been more satisfactory. Maria wore the dark cloth dress and long coat she intended to travel in, and as she knelt bareheaded at the altar, Madame Jacobus held the pretty head-covering that matched it. So that as soon as the registry had been made in the vestry, she bid farewell to all her friends, and with a look of adorable love and confidence placed her hand in her husband's.

He was so happy that he was speechless, and he feared a moment's delay. Until he had Maria safely on board the "Dolphin," he could not feel certain of her possession. The suspense made him silent and nervous; he could only look at his bride and clasp her hands, until she had passed safely through the crowded streets and was securely in the cabin of the waiting ship. Then, with the wind in her sails and the sunshine on her white deck, the "Dolphin" went swiftly out to sea.

But not until the low-lying land was quite lost to sight was Lord Medway completely satisfied. Then he suffered the rapture in his heart to find words. He folded Maria in her furs, and clasped her close to his side, and as the daylight faded and the stars shone out upon her lovely face, he told her a thou-

sand times over, how dear, how sweet, how beautiful she was!

Ah! Youth is sweet! and Life is dear to Love and Youth; and these two were supremely happy while whole days long they talked of their past and their future. And though the journey lasted their honeymoon out, they were not sorry. They were going to be in London for the Christmas feast, and Medway remembered that he had promised Mr. Semple to "bring Lady Medway home before the New Year," and he was pleased to redeem his word.

"For I liked your father, Maria," he said. "He seemed to me one of the finest gentlemen I ever met, and——"

"My stepmother is a lady also," Maria answered, "one of the Norfolk Spencers; and many women would have been worse to me than she was. Sometimes I was in the wrong too."

"They must keep Christmas with us. *Christmas in our own home!* Maria, you hold me by my heart. Sweet, say what you wish, and you shall have it." And indeed it would be impossible to express in written words a tithe of the great content they had. For all their hopes and plans and dreams of future happiness were

> "but Ministers of Love
> And fed his sacred flame,"

and the bliss so long afar, at length so nigh, rested in the great peace of its attainment.

In leaving New York immediately after their marriage, Lord and Lady Medway escaped the misery of seeing the last agony of the royalist inhabitants of that city. For six months Sir Guy Carleton had

been sending them to Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Canada, to the Bahamas and the West India Islands, and yet the condition of the city in these last days is indescribable. To remove a large household is no easy matter, but the whole city had practically to be moved, and at the same time at least two thousand families driven from their homes at the occupation of New York, had returned and were gradually taking possession of their deserted dwellings. The confusion was intensified at the last by the distraction of those who had hesitated until delay was no longer possible, by the sick and the helpless, and the remnant who had been striving to procure money, or were waiting for relatives and friends. Such a scene as New York presented on the morning of the final evacuation on the twenty-fifth of November, 1783, has no parallel in modern history.

It was followed by a scene not only as intensely dramatic, but also as exhilerating and joyful as the former was distracting and despairing—the entry of the triumphant Army of Freedom. As the rear-guard of the British army left the Battery, it came marching down the Bowery—picked heroes of a score of battlefields—led by General Knox. It passed by Chatham Street and Pearl Street to Wall Street and so to Broadway, where it waited for the procession headed by General Washington and Governor Clinton, the officers of the army, citizens on horseback, and citizens on foot. A salute of thirteen guns greeted the columns as they met, arms were presented and the drums beat. As a military procession, it was without impressiveness, as a moral procession, it was without equal in the annals of the

world. No bells chimed congratulations, no bands of music stirred popular enthusiasm; it notably lacked all the usual pomp of military display, but no grander army of self-wrought freemen ever greeted their chief, their homes, and their native city.

Madame Jacobus, weeping tears of joy, viewed it from her window. Early in the morning she had sent a closed carriage for her friend Madame Semple; but it had returned empty.

"Janet Semple kept herself alive for this day," she said. "I wonder why she did not come. She prayed that her eyes might see this salvation, and then she has not come to see it. What is the matter, I wonder?"

A very simple and yet a very great thing was the matter. When Madame had put on her best gown, some little necessity took her back to the parlor. The Elder was crouching over the fire and down his white face tears were unconsciously streaming. She could not bear it; she could not leave him.

"The joy is there, the victory is won, and the blessing is for a' generations," she said. "I'll never be missed in the crowd, and I can sing 'Glory be to God' in my ain house. So I'll stay where I'm needed, by my dear auld man; it was for better or for worse, for richer or poorer, in joy, or in sorrow, while baith our lives lasted," she mused, "and Janet Semple isna one to forget that bargain." She went quickly back to her room, spoke only into the ear of God her joy and her thanksgiving, and then taking off her festival garments, knocked at Neil's door as she went down stairs.

"Are you going out, Neil?"

"No; I shall stay with father. I am just going to him."

They went together, and as they entered the room, the Elder looked up:

"Aren't you going to see the show, Neil?" he asked.

"I prefer to stay with you, sir," was the answer. The old man looked from his son to his wife gratefully, and murmuring, "Thank you baith," he fainted away.

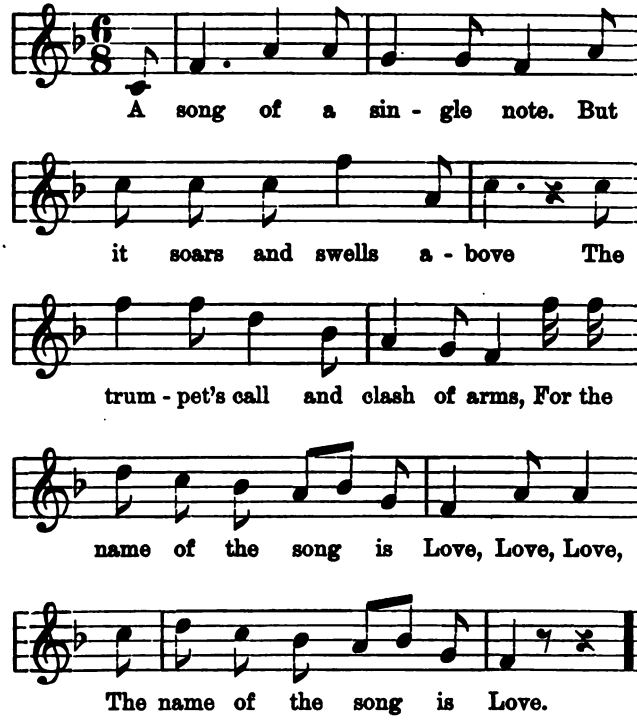
Tenderly they lifted him to a couch, and he soon responded to the remedies applied; but Janet gave him a soothing draught, and they sat the afternoon through, watching him. They could hear the joyful acclaims—the shouts and songs of a redeemed people—the noise of a multitude giving itself to a tumultuous joy; but the real gladness of grateful hearts was by the rekindled hearth fires. Fathers and mothers at home again! After seven years' wandering, they knew what Home meant. Their houses were dismantled, but they had Liberty! Their gardens were destroyed, their shade trees burnt, but they had Liberty! Their churches were desecrated, but they had Liberty! Their trade was gone, their fair city mutilated and blackened with fire, her streets torn up, and her wharfs decayed, but thank God, they had Liberty! Never again would they be the subjects of any king, or the victims of any imposed tyranny. They were free men. They had won their freedom, and they who have once tasted of the sharp, strong wine of Freedom will drink thereof forever.

* * * * * * *

These events occurred exactly one hundred and eighteen years ago, but those who happen to be in that lovely country which lies between Yorkshire and Lancashire can find in Medway Castle one frail memento of them. A little diplomacy and a little coin of the realm dropped into the keeper's hand will procure them admittance. And after viewing its rooms of state, its splendid library, and its picture gallery, they may seek a litttle room toward the sunrising, called "the Lady Maria's parlor." Its furniture of crimson satin is faded now, but it doubtless suited well the dark beauty so well depicted in a large portrait of her, that is one of the ornaments of the east wall. The portrait of her husband, Lord Ernest Medway, is near to it, but between them is a sheet of ordinary writing paper, yellow with age, but still keeping a legible copy of three verses and the pretty, simple, old tune to which they were sung. It is the original copy of *"The Song of a Single Note,"* the song they sang together at Nicholas Bayard's summer entertainment one hundred and twenty-one years ago. Lord Medway always said it was an enchanted song, and that, as its melodious tones fell from his lady's lips, they charmed his heart away and gave it to her forever.

And if other lovers would learn this fateful melody, why here is a copy of it. If they sing it but once together, it may be that they will sing it as long as they live:

"For through the sense, the song shall fit
The soul to understand."

A SONG OF A SINGLE NOTE.

Mortals may sing it here below,
The angels sing it above;
For all of heaven that earth can know
Is set to the Song of Love,
Love, love, love, is set to the Song of Love.

Then bid the trumpet and drum be still,
And battle flags idly float;
Better by far that men should sing
The Song of a Single Note.
Love, love, love, the Song of a Single Note.

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